The Bookman

"I am a Bookman."—*James Russell Lowell.*

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NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.
A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

The Christmas Bookman met, as usual, with the most gratifying success and was largely oversubscribed and out of print before publication. We thank very warmly the many readers who have written to congratulate us upon it, and whose opinions are pleasantly summarised in the description that brilliant journalist, Mr. A. J. Dawson, has given of it in his London Letters as "the most sumptuous production of its kind, before or since the war, and a veritable treasure house of literary and artistic interest; not merely for a day's æsthetic pleasure, but for a year's reference."

Two volumes of essays that Mr. Humphrey Milford is about to publish are "The Problem of Style," by J. Middleton Murry, and "Wiltshire Essays," by Maurice Hewlett.

"IF WINTER COMES."

PRIZE COMPETITION.

Announcement of Awards.

Mr. A. S. M. Hutchinson's novel—"If Winter Comes"—is the most discussed novel of the year as it is one of the greatest novels of many years.

Sir J. M. Barrie has written to the author: "Please let a fellow-writer congratulate you very heartily on 'If Winter Comes.' The best novel I have read for many a day."

Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, the publishers of "If Winter Comes," offered two prizes of £5 each for the best answer to the following questions suggested by the story:

1. Should Sabre have cleared his name by telling Twyning of Twyning's son's guilt?
2. Was Sabre justified in giving the shelter of his home to Effie, when his wife's disapproval was such that she refused to stay in the house?

The names of the successful competitors are:

(*a*) Miss Dora Kennedy,
Tullyreagh, Glarryford, Co. Antrim,

(*b*) MISS EDITH E. CRAWFORD,
Prospect House,
Filey, Yorkshire,

who will each receive £5 and autographed copies of the book.

Autographed copies of the book will also be sent to :

(*a*) MISS E. M. JONES,
6, Schubert Road,
East Putney.

(*b*) MR. J. A RICHARDS, M.I.P.S.,
10, Park Road,
Tenby, South Wales.

These prizes have been awarded in consultation with the author, who writes to the publishers as follows :

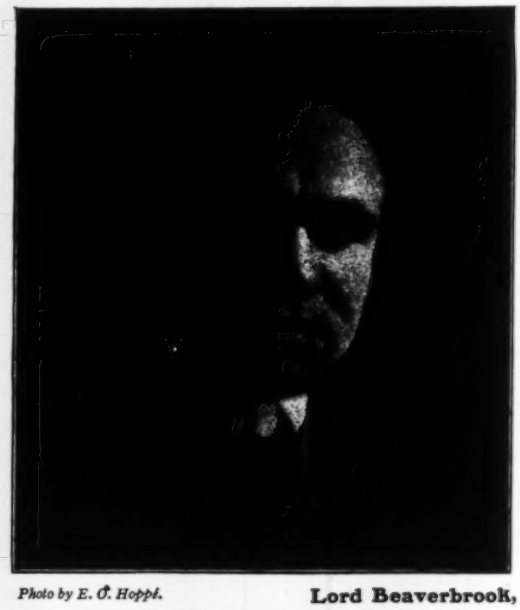


Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Lord Beaverbrook,
whose new book, "Success" (Stanley Paul), is reviewed in this Number.

" I have had a perfectly miserable evening deciding between the selected survivors of this competition. I managed to reduce them to four—to Miss Dora Kennedy, Mr. James A. Richards, Miss E. Margaret Jones and Miss Edith E. Crawford—and then, with increasing misery to two, and then went to bed feeling a brute towards the two who had just failed, and indeed, towards many others who should, at least, be highly commended.

" Out of the four named above, I chose Miss Crawford because she spoke of the reader's ' immense relief ' when Sabre held his hand and did not take his revenge. I think only an involuntary sense of what is supremely right could have caused relief at such an outcome, and therefore that Sabre must have been supremely right ; a shrewd point, also, in answering the second question, that it was in effect Mabel, and not Sabre, who broke up the home. Miss Kennedy I thought a deserving winner because her answers to *both* questions are equally good. What greatly added to the difficulty of selection was that so many competitors were good in one answer and not so good in the other. But the replies of Miss E. M. Jones and Mr. Richards ran these two winners painfully close."

MISS KENNEDY'S ESSAY.

Answer to Question 1.

Which of us could have foregone such sweet and perfect revenge on that " treble-dyed Iscariot," Twyning, as Effie's letter afforded ? And though Sabre found his enemy already stricken by the heaven-dealt blow, did he not owe it to himself to establish his own innocence ?

From the human standpoint, it was the obvious and justifiable course of action. But the divine ethic far transcends the human, and Sabre was nearer the divine than most of us.

That new revelation, " God is Love," he had glimpsed first from Effie, and she had trusted him to be with Harold what he had always been with everybody—gentle, and understanding things. So he *could not but* leave Twyning the consolation that his son had been the perfect boy he supposed—though to himself it was the " cumulative touch " that pushed him right into hell.

In the working together of all things, however, his altruism served him far better than any self-seeking would have done.

Had his innocence been legally proved, Mabel could not have got her divorce and so left him free for Nona —Nona who, loving and understanding him as she did, would be the perfect comrade in a glad new spring.

Answer to Question 2.

These two characteristics of Sabre's—his " vivid sense " of what was right in his conduct and his " corroding struggle " to do it, were manifested in the sheltering of Effie in his home.

The direct and piteous appeal of the penitent girl, sublime in her pathetic motherhood, who had lived in his house as employee and friend, was to him the clear call of duty which he must obey at whatever cost. But, the individual conscience, not being infallible, the question is whether Sabre's Christ-like compassion for Effie was compatible with his duty towards his convention-ruled wife.

Mr. Harold Nicolson,
whose new novel, "Sweet Waters" (Constable), is reviewed in this Number.

Sabre's relationship to Effie, being purely one of fraternal friendship, he simply could not understand Mabel's insinuation, and thus an important factor in a problem objectively stated is eliminated in a moral situation which confronted Sabre.

Now, as always, he pitied his wife for that narrowness of outlook which made her so intolerant, but surely he was justified, as a responsible being, in refusing to circumscribe his own conduct accordingly. There need have been no scandal, but Mabel's dismissal of the faithful servants suggests,

Miss Marie Bjelke Petersen.

especially in the light of her supposed subsequent history, that she had her own ends to subserve.

MISS CRAWFORD'S ESSAY.

Answer to Question 1.

All admirers of the gentle-hearted Sabre must rejoice that he remained true to his own ideals of conduct by refraining from crushing Twyning in the hour of his despairing grief over his son's death. Twyning, infamous though he was, sincerely loved his son, whom he had almost idealised into "a thing ensky'd and sainted." Mark was too generous to aggravate Twyning's distress by forcing upon him a true picture of Harold as a quite ordinary and only too human boy, involved in a liaison and too cowardly even to attempt to protect the girl he had betrayed. How great is the reader's relief when the storm of passion aroused by the discovery of the letter is over, and Sabre is himself again, anchored once more to his belief in the omnipotence of love, that priceless revelation which he had so hardly won, and of which Effie in her happy days had given him a glimpse.

> To suffer woes which Hope deems infinite,
> To forgive wrongs deeper than death or night,
> To defy power which seems omnipotent,
> To love, to bear, to hope, till Hope creates
> From its own wreck the thing it contemplates,
> Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent.
> * * * * *
> This is alone life, joy, empire and Victory.

Answer to Question 2.

Sabre was right in sheltering Effie. He most deeply felt a moral obligation to protect her in her friendless state, and he was not the man to yield to his wife on a point of honour. His action was entirely consistent with his character, and it is what we should have expected from him!

Mr. W. M. Parker.
whose play, "Witching Willow," is to be performed in Glasgow this month.

Equally characteristic was the attitude of his wife. Effie's first appeal was made to her, and her heartless desertion of her husband when the crisis came placed him in an impossible position and defenceless against scandal. It was in effect Mabel, not Effie, who broke up the home, and in these circumstances the fatal mistake of Mark's conduct lay in neglecting to establish the identity of Effie's betrayer. Quite unpardonable was (in my opinion) Effie's selfishness in allowing such a stigma to rest for months on the name of her protector.

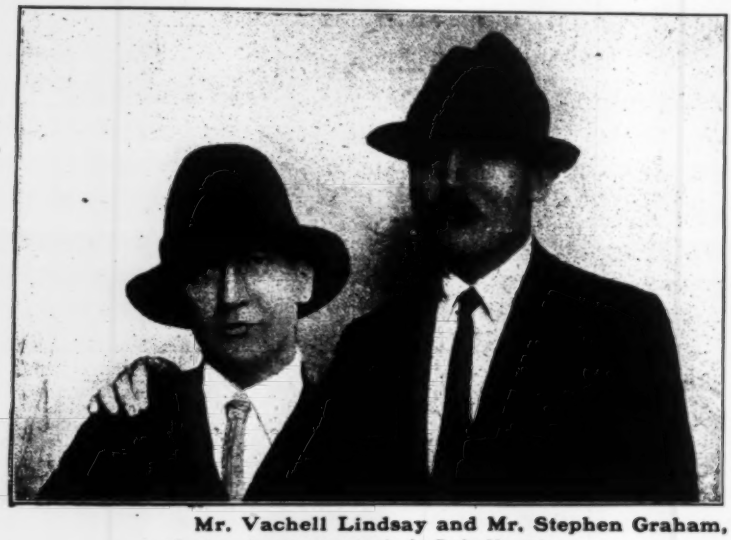
Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. F. Britten Austin,**
whose striking play, "The Thing that Matters," has just been successfully produced at the Strand Theatre.

Mr. Bliss Carman
crowned with the wreath of maple leaves presented by the Montreal branch of the Canadian Authors' Association.

Mr. Bliss Carman, who has been living and working as a journalist in America for some years past, has returned home to Canada, and on arriving at Montreal met with a most enthusiastic reception from the students of the University and from the Canadian Authors' Association. Addressing a crowded meeting at the Ritz-Carlton Hall, Mr. John Murray Gibbon, the President of the Association, paid a very high tribute to the genius of Bliss Carman, the greatest poet in Canadian literature. A charming ceremony followed, in which the pupils of the Strathearn School crowned the poet with a wreath of maple leaves.

Miss Marie Bjelke Petersen, who is rapidly becoming one of the most popular of Australian novelists, was born in Denmark, but has for some years now been living in Tasmania. She has put the life and scenery of Tasmania into two of her novels, and is deeply interested in studying the cosmopolitan people who make up the mining population there. Her novels have been translated into several languages and are winning an

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Wilfrid Ewart,**
whose brillian novel, "Way of Revelation" (Putnams), is reviewed in this Number.



Mr. Vachell Lindsay and Mr. Stephen Graham,
after returning from tramping in the Rocky Mountains.
Mr Graham's new book, "Europe—Whither Bound?" (Thornton Butterworth), is reviewed in this Number.

increasing vogue in America. A new edition of one, "The Captive Singer,' is published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, and her latest, "Dusk," has just been produced by Messrs. Hutchinson.

With everybody talking of hard times, it is cheering to find that a new author can still find a publisher if he writes a good novel. "The Valley of Paradise," a first novel by Alfred Gordon Bennett, is to be published this month by Mr. Fisher Unwin, and the world film rights in it have already been disposed of. It is a romance of London Chinatown and the South Sea Islands. Mr. Bennett, both a new novelist and a young one, for he is only a little over twenty, is the son of Alderman Arthur Bennett, of Warrington, himself the writer of several admirable volumes of prose and verse.

The Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature in the University of Edinburgh has now recommended that the James Tait Black Memorial Book Prizes for the year 1920, which were instituted by the late Mrs. Janet Coats or Black, of Millearn, Ayr, as a memorial to her husband, the late James Tait Black, publisher, Edinburgh, should be awarded as follows: For the best Biography or work of that nature to Mr. George M. Trevelyan, for "Lord Grey of the Reform Bill," and for the best novel to Mr. D. H. Lawrence for "The Lost Girl."

A three-act play of modern life by Mr. W. M. Parker, entitled "Witching Willow," is to be produced at the Athenæum Theatre, Glasgow, on the 30th of this month. The producer is Mr. R. E. Jeffrey. This is Mr. Parker's first appearance as a dramatist, but he has done a good deal of critical work in many periodicals, including THE BOOKMAN, and a few years ago published an admirable volume of studies of "Modern Scottish Writers."

Messrs. Macmillan have added to their excellent edition of the novels and stories of Henry James (7s. 6d. each volume) "The Tragic Muse," in two volumes.

Gyldendal, the well-known publishing house of Copenhagen, Christiania and London, are offering a prize of £3,500 (70,000 Kr.) for the best novel written in Danish or Norwegian during the coming year. A book of distinctive literary value is required, but at the same time its idea and plot must be worked out in an active manner likely to prove popular and create wide interest. This we believe to be the greatest amount ever offered for a prize novel.

Mr. H. Caldwell Cook, M.A., the author of "The Play Way," will be remembered for the remarkable results he has obtained by stimulating the boys of the Perse School, Cambridge, to write original poems and to compose and act plays. Mr. Cook is publishing, through Messrs. Batsford, a selection of these poems from the junior and middle forms, under the title of "Homework and Hobby Horses." The series includes Lays, Ballads, Littleman Rimes and Carols, which have been set to music by a colleague of the editor, Mr. F. G. Hambleton, who also contributes the cover design.

We are beginning to abandon the futile old discussion of whether photography is an art, for most of us seem to have come to the sensible conclusion that, like painting, sculpture and etching, it is and it is not; everything depends on the artist. Mr. E. O. Hoppé, who has done distinguished work with the brush as well as with the camera, has no doubt on the subject. He holds that photography is a fine art in itself, and no more to be compared with painting than that is to be compared with modelling in clay or silver. Unless the photographer is an artist, as Mr. Max Weber has it, he cannot to any purpose "seize and control the fugitive and significant vibrations of light,

time and mood in nature and in life, and record them permanently." The artist can exercise and embody, in the few moments of exposure, " singular quickness of invention and perception, keen personal observation and fine æsthetic impulses." That Mr. Hoppé himself has these qualities is self-evident in the wonderful series of photographs he took of New York in all its varied aspects during his recent visit to America, and in the no less striking collection of typical characters that he has picked out and photographed in English and American cities. These, with a selection of his portraits of famous authors, artists, composers, and public men, will be on exhibition this month at the Goupil Gallery.

The Christmas Bookstall section of the *Boston Evening Transcript* is certainly the most exhaustive survey we have seen of the year's output of books in America, and we congratulate Mr. Edwin F. Edgett, the *Transcript's* literary editor, on its achievement. Mr. Edgett's personal contributions include a very interesting article on the uncollected and recently discovered poems of Walt Whitman. The section has filled four supplements in successive issues of the paper, and in addition to the long catalogue of books, with a brief descriptive note of each, includes a variety of articles on subjects of literary interest and a full chronicle of the best short stories that have been published during the year in American magazines. It is gratifying to note that a very respectable percentage of English authors figure in this list as well as in the book lists. The fourth and concluding section numbers among its contents an article on Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, " A Crichton of the Hour," by Sidney Dark.

Miss Henrietta Leslie,

whose new novel, " Belsavage " (Page & Co.) is reviewed in this number.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

" Charlie," by Louis Delluc (2s.; John Lane), gives a very interesting account of Charlie Chaplin, the man and his methods. It is illustrated with a number of excellent photographs.

The quiet realism of Miss Peggy Webling's latest novel, " The Fruitless Orchard " (8s. 6d. net; Hutchinson), is its strength and its charm. She sets out to relate the history of a girl journalist in London who wins her way to literary success; she describes both her outward life of work and triumph, and the cloistered existence of a reticent nature, in which are hidden profound emotion, disillusion and dreams unrealised. It is a story of unfulfilment, and because of this a faint melancholy shadows its pages—there is even something tragic in the resignation, the blessedness of unselfishness, that come to Alison Booker in place of the love fate denies her. As an interviewer on *The Arrow*, she cherishes a secret devotion for the assistant editor, who little deserves it, and finding her affection misplaced, becomes mellowed rather than embittered, only to care later for a man already married, and to give him up in a manner entirely consistent with her temperament. The characters are cleverly drawn, and reveal Miss Webling's usual insight and sympathy; the exploits of Jerry Cuff, street artist, and the doings of the members of St. Swithin's, keep the interest very much alive, no less than the experiences and development of Alison herself. Miss Webling does not strain after sensation or dramatic effect; her aim lies closer to everyday life and is poignantly true to it, and we feel at the finish that we have looked into the soul of a living personality, sharing for a brief while another's joy and suffering.

Mr. Leicester Romayne's sketches of Portuguese life and character in " The Blue Skies of Portugal " (London: Hachette) make very pleasant and entertaining reading. He shows a happy descriptive gift, especially in his recollections of " Oporto Days," and touches in stories and telling incidents with a picturesque narrative skill. The story of Rita, in the fourth of his chapters, is particularly good.

" Gilbert and Sullivan Opera," by H. M. Walbrook (F. V. White & Co.; 3s. 6d.)—all about the operas and the authors of them, is a book that should be in great demand now, when these famous musical plays are running again with unabated popularity. A well written, informative, interesting history and commentary that we warmly recommend to all Gilbert and Sullivan lovers, old and new. It has a foreword by Sir Henry Wood, and is enlivened and decorated with sketches by H. M. Bateman and W. Herbert Holliday.

The Ruskin Centenary Council has issued in booklet form (5s.) the lecture delivered by Mr. Bernard Shaw in November, 1919, on " Ruskin's Politics." The wit and humour of the lecture are in the happiest Shavian vein, and Mr. Shaw deduces from Ruskin's political utterances that though he had no faith in Democracy, he was a Communist and a prophet of Bolshevism.

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THE BOOKMAN GALLERY.

MARGARET PEDLER.

VERY truly has it been said that "all the world loves a lover"; that at heart we are all romantic; and herein lies to a great extent the secret of the undoubted appeal of Margaret Pedler's work. She is deservedly one of the most popular of our modern novelists, and her books, with their freshness and originality, have been acclaimed by all romance-loving readers. The author herself shares with her readers a frank enjoyment of romance, while coupling with it in her personality a keen appreciation of practical values, a sense of humour and a knack of wresting experience out of everyday happenings.

Mrs. Pedler wrote her first short story while still in her teens and had the rather exceptional experience of being paid twice over for it—though, needless to say, the editor did not refuse the return of the second cheque! Her juvenile efforts, however, received but scant encouragement from her family, and she turned her thoughts to music. She was for some years a student at the Royal Academy of Music, finally completing her training under the late Signor Randegger, with a view to taking up singing professionally.

Photo by Langfier. **Mrs. Margaret Pedler.**

The fates, however, decreed this was not to be her *métier* in life, and very soon her career as a singer was cut short by her marriage to a well-known Devonshire sportsman. Her husband is a descendant of Sir Francis Drake, of circumnavigating fame, and one of their most treasured family possessions is the cedarwood box which accompanied him round the world, and which, in the language of these later days, one might conclude was his mascot!

Naturally, possessing both literary and musical talent, Mrs. Pedler is a keen lover of the beautiful, and after her marriage she devoted her time to the development of her pretty old-world garden and to the collection of old china and furniture. In addition to these hobbies she worked hard at musical composition and has written both the lyrics and music of several songs.

Living as she does amongst such beautiful surroundings, and being the possessor of good descriptive powers and great ability in character-drawing, it was only natural that her literary talent should again come uppermost, and she once more turned her thoughts to writing. But this time it was on a more ambitious scale, and her well-known novel, "The Splendid Folly," was the result.

Mrs. Pedler has for the most part laid the principal scenes of her novels in "glorious Devon," the county she knows so intimately, and the delicate charm of which she is so well able to convey. But she is a firm believer in the necessity of travel for a writer who wishes to enlarge her ideas and to obtain local colour and the atmosphere of places. During the last two years she has travelled considerably on the continent with this purpose in mind and hopes one day to visit the States, where she has both friends and family connections who are anxious to welcome her.

In appearance Mrs. Pedler is tall and fair, and she has the priceless gifts of a charming personality and a bright and sunny disposition. She is one of the women novelists who takes a thoroughly feminine interest in the subject of clothes and has a particular *penchant* for ear-rings, of which she has quite a charming collection.

She writes, as she does most things, with intense enjoyment and, after a morning of real hard work, is quite ready to enter with zest into tennis, badminton, swimming, sculling or whatever may be on the *tapis* at the moment. She takes the keenest interest in all kinds of outdoor sports and games.

Her second novel, "The Hermit of Far End," was not only an altogether delightful story, but it was a fine piece of literary workmanship. Following that came "The House of Dreams-Come-True."

Next came "The Lamp of Fate," a tense, emotional story of a dancer, which Mrs. Pedler has treated forcefully and with a keen sense of dramatic values.

On a quieter note but with the same romantic charm, which seems likely to make it a worthy rival of its predecessors, is her new novel, "The Moon Out of Reach," which has just been published.

In addition to her novels she has written an original play, "Who Pays?" produced in London in June, and a dramatic version of "The Hermit of Far End" may be arranged for in the near future.

The work of Margaret Pedler has made a sure place for itself, and she is one of the "best-sellers" both in England and America. The general appeal of her stories is proved by the increasing number of appreciative letters she receives from readers of all ages. Which brings us back to the point from which we started, and which Mrs. Pedler has so triumphantly proved—that there is an almost limitless public for such writers of simple and sincere romance.

THE READER.

EUGÈNE GOOSSENS.

By A. Eaglefield Hull.

During recent years, far too much emphasis has been placed on the value of nationality in music. Environment is so much more important and more powerful in moulding a man's musical physiognomy and stimulating his creative work. Next to good opportunities for music-making and the encouragement given by congenial and experienced friends, romantic natural surroundings have nearly always brought the best out of a man. For the last few years the Welsh fortress-village of Harlech has been a jealously guarded retreat for composers and artists, and an artistic colony which included Cyril Scott, Bantock, Goossens, Morales, Bertram Binyon, Astra Desmond, Langdon Coburn and Joseph Holbrooke (who knows every nook and cranny in the rocks, caves and forests) used to be the rule. Then there was also Fergusson the painter, Sancha the cartoonist, and Margaret Morris with an occasional Summer School for Greek dancing. Now with the advent of chars-à-bancs, even on the lower road, the glory has departed; and although the Snowdon views are still as beautiful as ever, the knowledge of the summit and half the land round it being repeatedly put up to public auction, is rather disquieting; for the Harlech charm came from its way of doing fine things quietly and unostentatiously. In 1919 one of the greatest pageants ever organised was given in the interior and on the walls of the castle, but no echoes of the clashing hosts reached the outside world. Those fortunate enough to have lived amidst this panorama of sea and mountain, of Roman camps and Celtic fortresses, of fairy lakes and rolling hills, will understand the magic influence it exerts on creative art. It was there "The Eternal Rhythm," Goossens' finest work, was completed and orchestrated.

* * * * *

Goossens is one of the most interesting personalities amongst the modern composers. A Frenchman by land of birth, British by training and experience, with Belgian blood in his veins, he is a striking example of the superiority of environment and circumstance over nationality in things of art. His open, receptive mind has taken the good from all sources which offered, and it is because his mind is so open, his sensitiveness so great, that he has been longer in finding his full musical personality than many composers. A love of other arts, besides his own special one, has kept him keenly alive to modern movements, and a genial and generous nature has enabled him to make the best of his operatic and orchestral experience in this much-underrated land of ours, where others would have succumbed.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Eugène Goossens.

* * * * *

Eugène Goossens was born on May 26th, 1893. His father is the well-known Carl Rosa Opera conductor, a genial personality and a fine artist, whose family of three sons and two daughters are all distinguished in music. Eugène was the youngest son; Lèon is one of the greatest living oboists; his two sisters are fine harpists; his other brother, alas, fell in the great war. From the early age of ten till thirteen, Eugène studied at Bruges Conservatoire, then for a year at Liverpool College of Music which, since Goossens went up to the Royal College of Music, London (with the "Liverpool Violin Scholarship") must have fulfilled its ambition and closed its doors.

Having won high honours at the R.C.M., the English musical world was *nominally* open to him. *Practically*, the only opening he could find for his great talents was a five-years' service as a violinist in the Queen's Hall Orchestra under Sir Henry Wood. A fine experience, nevertheless; for there he acquired his marvellous knowledge of every sound in the orchestra, from the shrillest note of the piccolo to the lowest depths of the contra-fagotto and bass-tuba; there he could not fail to gain much knowledge of the baton, and, what counts for more, of the conducting of rehearsals in a general way. That there are no concomitant evils from playing in an orchestra, Goossens is a convincing example. For keenness, enthusiasm, sensitiveness and sweet sanity he is unsurpassed. Towards the end of 1915 Sir Thomas Beecham invited him to conduct Stanford's "The Critic," and this he did so successfully that he became Beecham's right hand man, conducting regularly at Drury Lane, the Aldwych, and in the provinces. Orchestral concerts also fell to his lot, and at the Manchester, Leeds, Bradford and Liverpool festivals he is ever a popular conductor. Finally, his conducting of an all-British programme at the British Music Society's 1920 Congress, and at his own special concerts of contemporary music, set the seal on his growing

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reputation, and established him as one of the greatest of living conductors, with a special *flair* for contemporary music.

* * * * *

The works which belong to his student's period may be passed over lightly—as also may the pieces conducted during the period of his Queen's Hall playing ("Chinese Variations," "Persius" and "Ossian"). The "Impressions of a Holiday" for pianoforte, flute and cello (five tiny musical pictures of country life) would serve well as an introduction to his chamber music, although they are not now characteristic of the composer. The two chansons of "Fortunio" and of "Barberine" (to de Musset's words) deserve a similar description, and the "Concert Study" for piano shows him still in brilliant though superficial mood.

The two sketches ("By the Tarn" and "Jack o' Lantern") for string quartet and the brilliant and exhilarating "Scherzo" for orchestra, "Tam o' Shanter," point in a new direction. This course, however, was suddenly arrested by a rather conscious French phase, persisted in sufficiently long to prove that Goossens could beat the musical "impressionists" on their own ground. The phase covers some very charming and interesting work: his delightful settings of Edwin Evans's two "Proses lyriques" and the "Persian Songs," where he resists the temptation of simulating orientalism in the conventional way, and the "Kaleidoscope" for the piano, which consists of twelve miniatures on children's subjects, full of jolly little things and the funniest little touches. In the "Promenade" from this set we get a new mood, which changes to a kind of playful irony in the "Clockwork Dancer." The pedestrian mood is intensified in the later "Four Conceits" (1918) and the ironic vein of the "Clockwork Dancer" has then hardened in "The Gargoyle," and melted again in the "Marionette Show." The "Dance Memories" (No. 2 of the "Conceits") is little more than a joke, one hand being in the key of three sharps, the other three flats. The "Conceits" already belong to another phase, which the labellers would call Post-Impressionism, of which the "Three Nature Poems" for piano and the symphonic poem, "The Eternal Rhythm," are the finest examples so far.

The change to this new phase is already seen in his "Afternoon" and "Tea-Time" songs (words by Jean-Aubry) and the beautiful Violin Sonata. Here the deeper and more thoughtful emotions (absent from his preceding works, save for a few passages in the "Rhapsody" for cello and piano and the string quartet) are somehow refreshing, because more human and less aloof. A new note, half humorous, half savage, is heard too in his setting of H. R. Barbor's "The Curse," a character sketch of Spanish vagabondage.

For the Overture and Incidental Music to Verhaeren's "Philip II" the composer has gone back to impressionist methods, but in the "Nature Studies" and "The Eternal Rhythm" he has acquired a new language and a deeper personal feeling. The work is based on one of the prose "dance-dramas" of Terence Gray, a young poet whose work lies chiefly in the direction of mime-drama. The poem treats of the elemental rhythm of all visible and invisible natural forces and the responsive emotional vibrations which it awakes in the soul of the unfettered and fully-developed human being. A long introductory movement suggestive of the intense stillness of mountains, lakes and forests contains the principal theme, "Nature's Call." The "Eternal Melody," heard at first quietly, gradually increases in volume and intensity until, heralded by a dominating trombone theme, it reaches the climax in the "Colossal Rhythm of the Suns." The music then subsides, and the human response begins, with dance-subjects in 7–4 and 5–4 times. This also achieves a tremendous climax, and an epilogue closes the work in the opening mood of tranquil yet everlasting movement. It is in this piece that Goossens has come nearest to the human note which is such an important element in all truly great art. Bach, Beethoven, Strauss, Scriabin, Stravinsky, all have it, and it will doubtedly loom more and more in the future pieces of Goossens. A fairly safe augury for this increasing humanism may be founded on the evidences of his recent lectures for the British Music Society, in which he has shown himself singularly facile in placing himself *en rapport* with all kinds of audiences. His little brochure on "Modern Tendencies in Music," published by the Arts League of Service, is quite one of the best descriptions of the aims of the various modern movements in music.

The "Hommage à Debussy" for piano, written in 1920 and just published, is a short threnody in the style of Stravinsky's "Symphonies (chords) for Wind Instruments." The Goossens setting is less poignant, and quite acceptable, being cast in the mould of Scriabin's last Preludes; whereas the Stravinsky piece is an outrage on the lamented composer whom it impudently claims to commemorate.

Despite all these brilliant and interesting works, I am convinced that Goossens' best work has still to come. He has youth and physique on his side. He has passed through one stage after another so properly, even primly, thoroughly acquiring everything new (even if it doesn't matter much, like the Straussian chords in the "Cello Raphsody") that he has by now mastered all there is to master in technique—pointillist orchestration, Villemin's planes, Strauss's unrelated chords, Schönberg's expressional polyphony, and so on. There is nothing more for him to do now but speak strongly out of himself.

* * * * *

The earliest, and I believe the best, way of getting to know Goossens' music lies through the piano pieces, and his four contributions to this medium roughly correspond to the chief phases of his musical evolution—"Concert Study" (1915), the brilliant legerdemain stage; "Kaleidoscope" (1917–18), the French phase; "Nature Poems" (1919), the Stravinskian phase; and "Hommage à Debussy" (1920), a post-impressionist admiration of the great leader of French musical impressionism.

MOLIÈRE, 1622-1673.

By ANTHONY CLYNE.

GLORIOUS in French literature is the age of Louis Quatorze, and its greatest glories are the comic dramas of Molière. He created modern comedy, with unrivalled mastery of the subtlest humour, the most fantastic farce, and the most searching satire; he portrayed humanity so vividly and interpreted it so acutely and with such wide range that the significance of his plays is inexhaustible. Jean-Baptiste Poquelin was born in Paris in January, 1622, and after three centuries his genius is undimmed. His understanding of human nature seems as penetrative and powerful to-day as ever, his great gallery of familiar types as fresh and true.

That is because the genius of this upholsterer's son was rooted firmly in his own humanity. Sainte-Beuve said truly that to him we can apply with profound meaning the words of his own Tartufe: "Un homme . . . un homme enfin!" "He never ceases to be a man," writes Mr. Frederic Harrison, "wise, tender, and good in every fibre." In Shakespeare, the supreme romantic, the man is sometimes eclipsed by the poet, in Molière, always a realist, never. Molière created no Ariel or Caliban, but men and women only, such men and women as you and I may meet any day. Their trappings are different, but just as much trappings. Some of the whims and foibles he ridiculed have gone out of fashion, but folly never ceases. Molière lived in the midst of labour and anxiety. Had it been otherwise, he might have polished his art to the classical perfection of Racine, but it would have lacked that constant and intimate contact with life in which its chief power over us resides. His plots are sometimes loosely constructed, his language is often careless. He wrote much in haste, but when he had time he could fashion a close-knit drama of perfect symmetry and write with admirable brilliance and force. At twenty-one, having deserted in turn apprenticeship to the paternal trade and the study of the law, as leader of a travelling company of actors, for ten years he struggled amid hardships and sordid cares. Even during the last decade of his life, famous, though as actor and manager rather than author, under the patronage and protection of the king, he was burdened with prodigious labour, harassed by innumerable anxieties. He had to be simultaneously author, stage manager and actor. He was compelled to waste his energies upon the ephemeral entertainments of the Court. He had married at the age of forty a girl of twenty, a coquette who embittered his private life. He suffered much from ill-health. The favour of Louis excited envious intrigues he had perpetually to circumvent. The Jansenist historian, Baillet, was to describe him to the next generation as "one of the most dangerous foes which the age or the world has raised up against the Church of Christ," and during his life the ecclesiastics were ferociously hostile. At fifty-one, in the midst of all this toil and trouble, he was taken ill while acting in the title-rôle of his "Le Malade Imaginaire," and carried from the stage dying.

Molière.

Yet he remained the imperturbable artist, the humanity of his work never obscured by resentment as it was never falsified by sentiment, only tinged below the surface by a pathetic melancholy. Not with remote idealism, but in the name of common sense and common truth and common honesty he stripped the follies and faults of humanity of pretence and showed them in all their ridiculous emptiness, perversity and evil. Against prudes and libertines, poetasters and pedants, atheists and puritans, bores and humbugs of all kinds he fought, and his weapon was laughter. He combated egotism and hypocrisy and vanity in all their shapes because they distort human nature. That is the motive of his merciless satire of foppery and quackery and vice. Turn where one will among his plays, one discovers it. In "L'Avare" Harpagon remains human, though his miserliness is inhuman and greed has driven out all natural affections; because of his humanity he is infinitely more terrible. Consider a very different character, Philaminte in "Les Femmes Savantes." The complacent pedantry of the learned lady is made utterly absurd, but she is not only ridiculous. She remains a woman, with potentialities of both grace and grandeur of character discernible beneath the crust of pretentious so-called culture. We laugh, and afterwards or while we laugh we meditate upon the distortion of humanity's possible attainment. Always Molière attacks the artificial and degenerate as defacements and deformities of humanity. It was so in "Le Tartufe," a bitter satire against religious hypocrisy, which only the protection of the king enabled him to produce. Only the protection of the king, indeed, saved him from prosecution by the ecclesiastical authorities, imprisonment, probably death.

XUM

He attacked the puritanism of the Jansenists and the worldliness of the Jesuits, because both twist awry human nature. His was a sane, sweet, wholesome view of man and the demands of morality upon him. Upon the harsh creed of puritanism, with its denial of innocent natural pleasures, he looked with disgust as upon the materialism and ambition of other varieties of ecclesiasticism.

Of the many phases of the many-sided genius of Molière, his thirty plays together and each one separately pregnant with significance, some are less obvious than others. The continuous development of his art is very evident, and the marvel of that always expanding and deepening vision and always more delicate and powerful execution is intensified when we remember that all but two of these plays were composed during the last fourteen years of his life. He commenced by using established stage conventions, but with original power. He passed to the more subtle comedy of manners in "Les Précieuses Ridicules," and so by continuous progress to "Le Misanthrope" and "Le Tartufe," his greatest works, comedies of character conceived with such insight and so finely wrought that they have actually been denied the name of comedies. Less obvious to the ordinary reader than this development in his art is his indebtedness to other writers. Like Shakespeare, he freely seized upon the ideas of predecessors, especially the classical authors. But such borrowings were only the preliminary suggestions for his plays. He transformed them entirely, using them as occasions for his own peculiar modes of treatment. The perfect ease with which he did this is, as in the case of the English dramatist, a sign of his true genius. It was not from books, but from life he extracted the real raw material of his art, in the provinces a strolling player listening and watching in the streets, at Paris studying the Court, frequenting the shops of fashionable tailors and perruquiers. Still less obvious to the general reader is the manner in which, again like Shakespeare, he wrote for a particular stage. The greatest artists are often content to adapt themselves to temporary and local conditions. An example of this accommodation is the manner in which he bore in mind the characteristics of the members of his company, creating suitable parts for his wife, an excellent actress if an indifferent wife, his sister-in-law, and the others. Tartufe was plump, La Flèche in "L'Avare" lame because so were the actors playing these parts.

It should be evident from what has been said that Molière was more than a comic dramatist. He was a comic philosopher. His plays amuse all, but the thoughtful detect throughout a melancholy contempt for the vices and follies he castigates. In "Le Tartufe" and "Le Misanthrope" the comedy is so delicately expressed by unsparing analyses of character that it becomes indistinguishable from tragedy. We smile at Tartufe and yet we tremble with fear at his satanic force of evil, at Alceste and yet are wrung with the heartrending pathos. The sublime wickedness of Tartufe, repulsive hypocrite and shameless seducer of his benefactor's wife, overpowers the imagination with horror. Alceste is surely Molière's subtlest creation, a spirit fine-textured, sensitive, yearning to find in life some heart which understands, hating the shams and selfishness around, disappointed in all and left alone with his melancholy, weary and disillusioned. Many have thought that it was within himself that Molière discovered the character of Alceste and that in "Le Misanthrope" he related his own inner history. We cannot help believing this. Molière, like Alceste, could see too deeply and understand too much to rest content with what the world could offer. Like so many courageous and wise spirits, the supreme courage and ultimate wisdom of faith eluded him. But did it elude him? The yearning, the discontent, the perpetual combat with folly and vice is itself faith.

SOME RAREST EDITIONS OF BURNS.

BY DAVIDSON COOK, F.S.A.(Scot.).

I HAVE handled a copy of the famous 1786 Kilmarnock Edition of Burns, which some unwitting vandal had been using for "shaving paper," tearing the pages off, half a leaf at a time. Whether it was the providential purchase of a safety razor, or the cultivation of a beard, that saved the mutilated middle portion of the book, I know not, but the precious fragment was rescued, and is now in the great Murison Burns Collection recently gifted by Sir Alexander Gibb to the town of Dunfermline. It was costly shaving paper, for the Alloway Cottage Museum copy of the same book, uncut and in the original blue paper wrappers, was secured at exactly £1,000. I know of a similar copy sold by a provincial bookseller not long ago for £800. One of the five copies sent to Mrs. Dunlop was sold by auction in Edinburgh last April for £505, but it was a "cut" copy, measuring barely 8 inches by 5 inches as against the 9 inches by 6 inches of the much rarer "uncut" copies. The record price was achieved at the Hoe sale in America, when a good copy, but not in original state, was sold for £1,160—a mad price!

The Kilmarnock Burns, though a great treasure to the bibliophile, is by no means an excessively rare book. Much rarer than the book itself are the "Proposals" for its publication, of which only *one* copy is known—the one now in the Burns Cottage Collection. The three standard editions of Burns all blunder badly in their supposedly *verbatim* rendering of this unique item. Many will be glad to have an opportunity of correcting the errors (q.v. W. Scott Douglas, 1878, iv, 113; Henley & Henderson, 1896, i, 311; Chambers–Wallace, 1896, i, 316), from the following correct copy:

April 14th, 1786.

PROPOSALS,

for publishing by subscription,

SCOTCH POEMS,

By Robert Burns.

The Work to be elegantly Printed in One Volume, Octavo.

Price Stitched *Three Shillings.*

As the Author has not the most distant *Mercenary* view in Publishing, as soon as so many Subscribers appear as will defray the *necessary* Expence, the Work will be sent to the Press.

Set out the brunt side o' your shin,
For pride in *Poets* is nae sin;
Glory's the Prize for which *they* rin,
And *Fame's* their jo;
And wha blaws best the Horn shall win:
And wharefore no?

RAMSAY.

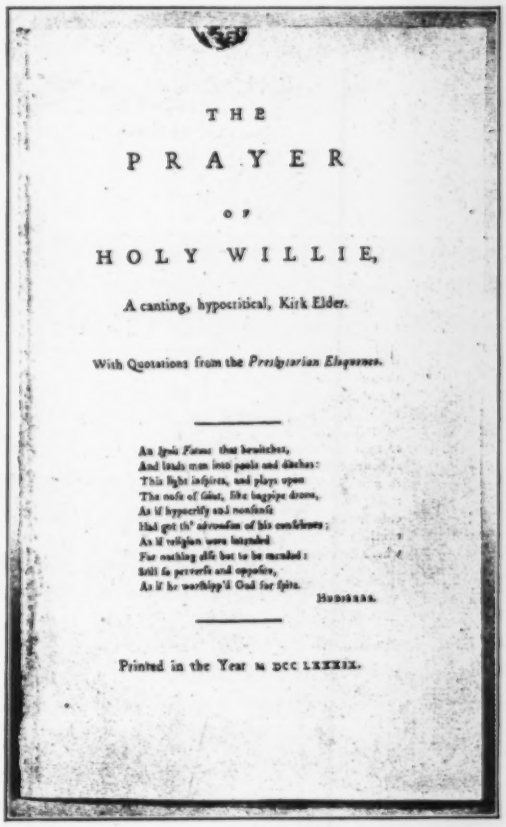
We, under Subscribers, engage to take the above mentioned Work on the Conditions Specified.

There follows a list of names in MS., some of which are in the handwriting of the Poet. One of the names has a penline through it, and alongside are the words: "The blockhead refused it."

Six hundred and twelve copies of "Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect" were printed by John Wilson. No world-census of the survivors has been compiled, but the collector with a long purse has little difficulty in securing a copy, as it figures fairly often in book auction sales. The British Museum has two copies, and two copies (one uncut) were included in the fine Burns collection recently acquired by Mr. John Gribbel of Philadelphia from Mr. D. M'Naught, LL.D., the editor of the *Annual Burns Chronicle*. The Burns Cottage copy has already been noted. In the Burns Monument close by there is another, not so choice, and the Kilmarnock Burns Monument also boasts a fine example. An uncut copy is in the collection of A. E. Newton, U.S.A., and no doubt a goodly number of the "survivors" have found homes in American collections. At the Burns Centenary Exhibition held in Glasgow in 1896, no fewer than *fifteen copies* of the original Kilmarnock Edition were shown, and while it is "not to be sneezed at," and could not well be ignored in such an article as this, the fact remains that, strictly speaking, it is not entitled to rank as one of the "rarest editions of Burns." Neither is the well-known Edinburgh Edition, whether "stinking" or "skinking" issues, of 1787, nor the London Edition of the same year, entitled to come under our heading. The fact is that none of the editions printed during the life-time of the Poet are of extraordinary rarity, with the exception of the *pirated* editions of Belfast and Dublin, dated 1787, and the first American edition—also a *pirate*—printed in Philadelphia in 1788. The *second* American edition, published in New York in the same year, is also infinitely rarer than any of the author's editions.

There are certain broadsides, printed while Burns was alive, which are of extreme rarity, but in addition to these, there is a much more important printed item which deserves to be made "kenspeckle." Henley & Henderson and other standard authorities inform us that "Holy Willie's Prayer" was *first* printed in one of the seven rare Poetical Tracts, published in Glasgow, by Stewart & Meikle, in 1799 (which were afterwards assembled in a very rare volume entitled "The Poetical Miscellany, containing Posthumous Poems, Songs, Epitaphs and Epigrams, by Robert Burns the Ayrshire Poet." Glasgow. Printed by Chapman & Lang for Stewart & Meikle. 1800). The Poet's great Satire on the "canting hypocritical Kirk Elder" was printed as a little eight-page chapbook—unknown to all the editors of Burns—*ten years* earlier than Stewart & Meikle's twopenny tract. "The Prayer of Holy Willie," dated 1789, is indeed one of the rarest Burns items, for only one copy is known (see illustration), which is now in the Alloway Cottage Collection. It is shown in one of the cases, and is No. 162 in the new and greatly improved edition of the catalogue provided for pilgrims to the "auld clay biggin" shrine.

Though "The Jolly Beggars" is deemed one of his masterpieces, Burns seems to have rated it very lowly,



THE

PRAYER

OF

HOLY WILLIE,

A canting, hypocritical, Kirk Elder.

With Quotations from the *Presbyterian Eloquence*.

An Ignis Fatuus that bewitches,
And leads men into pools and ditches:
This light inspires, and plays upon
The nose of Saint, like bagpipe drone,
As if hypocrisy and nonsense
Had got th' ascendon of his conscience;
As if religion were intended
For nothing else but to be mended:
Still so perverse and opposite,
As if he worshipp'd God for spite.

HUDIBRAS.

Printed in the Year M DCC LXXXIX.

Facsimile title page of first edition.

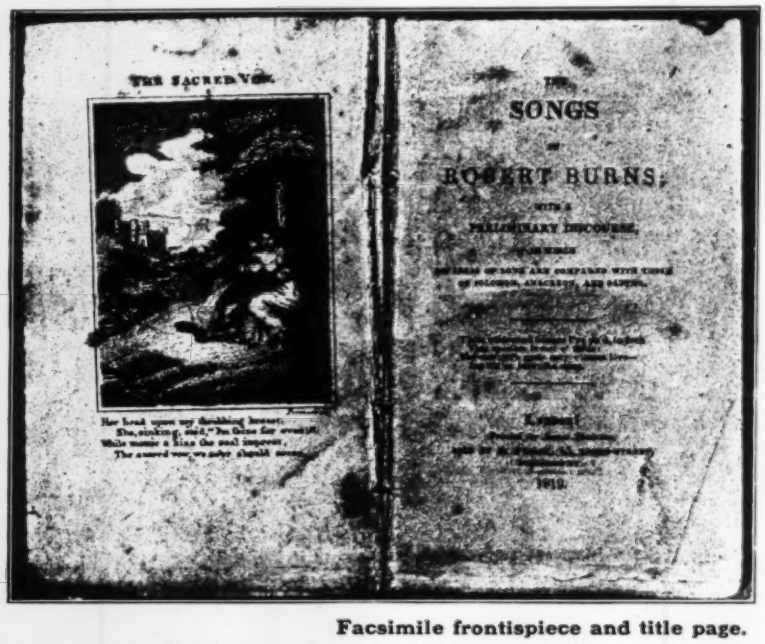
From the only known copy.

for in response to an inquiry from George Thomson concerning it, he wrote:

"I have forgot the Cantata you allude to, as I kept no copy, and indeed did not know that it was in existence; however, I remember that none of the songs pleased myself except the last—something about:—

Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest."

This neglected child of the Poet's Muse first appeared, "carefully printed from the Author's own manuscript," as a little undated sixteen-page chapbook, the first of the series of seven issued by Stewart & Meikle, who advertised it in the *Glasgow Courier* of Thursday, July 11th, 1799, to be published "on Saturday first." It was sold at twopence. There were various issues, and all are rare, especially the first issue, an uncut copy of which—one of the only two known—has changed hands at twenty guineas. It is entitled "The Jolly Beggars: A Cantata, by Robert Burns." I have two later issues



Facsimile frontispiece and title page.
From Mr. Davidson Cook's copy—one of the only two known.

which vary in imprint, and can easily be distinguished from the first, by the alteration in title, which is expanded to " The Jolly Beggars ; or Tatterdemallions. A Cantata, by Robert Burns, the Ayrshire Poet." We can differentiate by calling these the " Tatterdemallion " issues, and—noting the change in the ornamental design on the title page—can further distinguish the two as the " Lyre " issue, and the " Fiddle " issue.

Before leaving the " Twopenny box " mention should be made of two little chapbooks printed in Edinburgh the same year as the Glasgow seven. Only two are recorded, but more may have been issued. They are entitled, " Elegy on the Year Eighty-Eight " and " Sonnets from the Robbers "—" printed by David Willison, Craig's Close, for George Gray, Bookseller, No. 3, North Bridge Street, 1799." While not, strictly speaking, editions of Burns, these two tracts are Burnsiana items of such interest and rarity, that the Burns collector would gladly give half a dozen ordinary " editions " for either of them. Both contain early or first appearances of Burns poems. I know only of two copies of the " Elegy." A copy of the " Sonnets " was shown at the Burns Exhibition in Glasgow in 1896 (q.v. Memorial Catalogue, 1898, p. 414). It was loaned by Mr. George Gray, then Town Clerk of Rutherglen, but its present whereabouts I failed to trace, nor do I know of any other copy.

An item equally rare is Maria Riddell's " Biographical Sketch " (of Robert Burns), R. Noble, printer, Old Bailey, London, n.d., pp. 12, 8vo. Only one copy is recorded, which was loaned to the 1896 Burns Exhibition by Craibe Angus, and is dated in the catalogue (1796). In the Craibe Angus sale catalogue (1902, item 482), where it is described as " The only copy known to exist "—it is dated 1800. Who secured the little treasure at that great dispersal of Burns books, is as unknown to me as its present location.

Another book loaned to the Burns Exhibition by Mr. George Gray was a copy (formerly owned by Dr. Currie) of " Poems, ascribed to Robert Burns, the Ayrshire Bard, not contained in any edition of his works hitherto published," Glasgow, 1801. This is uncut, in the original boards with printed paper label on the front, and has the exceedingly rare cancelled leaf (pp. 53–4). This interesting volume—now owned by the writer—contains Currie's book-plate, but unfortunately has no indication of his opinion of Stewart's " thin octavo " which included poems, some of which Dr. Currie had deliberately excluded from the first collected edition of Burns's Works, edited (atrociously) by him, on behalf of the Poet's widow and family.

Currie's first edition, printed in Liverpool, and published in four volumes dated 1800, is not scarce, though nice uncut copies in the original boards are far from common. Howbeit, it stands as a landmark in Burns bibliography, and brings us to the most interesting period for Burns rarities—the years 1801–02.

One of the rarest of the 1801 editions is the first Montrose one, " printed by Dd. Buchanan ; sold by him, and by W. Mortimer, Aberdeen." Oliver's two-volume Edinburgh edition of the same year—of which there are a number of issues varying in the title page—is always held to be the *first with illustrations*, but this Montrose edition is embellished with many Bewick woodcuts—some merely ornamental tail-pieces, but many obviously meant as illustrations. In the Craibe Angus sale catalogue it is described as " Very rare, suppressed." It is not noted in Gibson's " Bibliography, 1881," which is also minus any record of the tiny two-volume edition dated 1801, published by James Robertson of Edinburgh, one of several publishers of unauthorised editions against whom legal proceedings were taken. The Craibe Angus copy was catalogued as " Very rare, suppressed." The reprint of 1802, noted in the " Bibliography," is only moderately scarce.

There is a Paisley printed one-volume edition, dated 1801, which is " very rare." To the same year belongs, according to the Bibliography printed in some of the Chambers editions of Burns's Works, an edition published by *M'Millan*, Glasgow. To be dogmatic in things bibliographical is very risky, but I think this may safely be dismissed as the *first* " mythical " edition. Chapman & Lang printed an edition for M'Lelland of Glasgow, dated 1801, and probably the *ultra-rare* M'Millan edition originated in the confusion of similar names. Chapman & Lang printed the same edition for other booksellers, but the only variation is in the names on the title pages. They are all rare.

The rarest of all the 1801 editions is another Glasgow one, " Printed by Thomas Duncan, Saltmarket," of which only *three* copies are known. Of these three copies, one is in the Kilmarnock Monument Collection ; another is owned by that great Burnsian, Mr. J. C. Ewing, the Librarian of Baillie Institution, Glasgow ; and the third is in the Murison Collection. Duncan's

edition has a number of poems not to be found in any of earlier *date*, and would thus, in addition to the lure of rarity, seem to have peculiar "first appearance" interest. In every case, however, these poems were copied from a still more interesting and, bibliographically, more important edition of *later date* which *preceded* Duncan's volume, to wit, "Stewart's Edition of Burns's Poems, including a number of Original Poems never before published": Glasgow, 1802. This seemingly impossible feat of an 1801 edition annexing poems from one dated 1802, is explained thus: Stewart's, Duncan's, and several other editions of that period were issued in "numbers." Stewart began publication in 1801, but did not issue his title page till 1802 (presumably with, or following his last number—the eighth), whereas the title page of Duncan's edition was issued with the first number in 1801 and so dated. When Stewart's last numbers were found to contain some new poems, Duncan and others appropriated them and issued them in the form of an "Appendix," but despite the date on their title pages Stewart was *first*. It must be stated, however, that the illustrations of Stewart's edition, the "page directions" of which do not fit the pagination, prove that Oliver's 1801 edition—from whence the plates originated—was earlier than Stewart; so that the "first appearances" in Oliver's volumes hold their ground.

Other extremely rare editions of Burns's Poems are dated 1802, notably "Crerar's Edition" in two volumes published in Kirkcaldy, in which once again we find the plates of Oliver's edition. Then we have a two-volume 1802 Paisley edition, in noting which the 1881 Bibliography adds: "This edition was suppressed, and the Publisher, R. Smith, alias 'Pea-strae,' was fined." Another scarce edition has the imprint: "Dundee: Printed by F. Ray. 1802." In the same year was printed the first Newcastle edition, printed by M. Angus & Son, and avowedly based on Stewart's edition. The Tyneside edition is by no means common, but it is not so difficult to find, nor as valuable as the Kirkcaldy, Paisley and Dundee volumes.

Following the rich 1801–2 period, Burns rarities are more scattered through the years. The scarce 1804 Cork edition in two volumes has a misprint in the title of some copies of volume two, the Poet's name being printed "Bunrs." Of the utmost rarity is the 1808 Musselburgh edition of the Poems, and hard after that comes the excessively rare *first* American edition of the "Letters Addressed to Clarinda" (Philadelphia; 1809).

Skipping a few years, and passing by many editions of varying degrees of rarity—among which we linger only to mention two printed in Perth in 1813—we come to another year rich in rarities—1819. To begin with, we have "The Poetical Works of Robert Burns" (London: Printed for J. Offor. 1819)—a book which I have no hesitation in describing, in bookseller's parlance, as "excessively rare." The town of Montrose is responsible for no less than three Burns rarities of the same year—"The Lyric Muse of Robert Burns," in one volume; "Poetical Works" in one volume; and "The Works of Robert Burns" in two volumes. Another treasure is "The Beauties of Burn's [*sic*] Poems" (Falkirk: T. Johnson. 1819).

In this same year was published what I take to be the *rarest of all editions* of the Songs of Burns. This was published by J. Thomson, London, and is entitled, "The Songs of Robert Burns, with a Preliminary Discourse, in which his ideas of Love are compared with those of Solomon, Anacreon, and Sappho." Speaking of a copy of this little book with the long title, given to him by Mr. Murison, Mr. Craibe Angus in "The Printed Works of Robert Burns: a Bibliography in Outline, 1899" (60 copies printed) says: "I have never seen another copy." There is no copy in the British Museum, and I assume that the Craibe Angus copy is the one now in the Kilmarnock Monument Collection—No. 111 in the 1909 catalogue. Our illustration of this very rare Burns book is from a choice copy, uncut, and in original boards with printed label on back—one of the greatest treasures in the Burns collection of the writer. The imprint varies from the Kilmarnock copy, so that though two, and only two copies of this edition of the Songs are known, of the identical issue each volume seems to be unique. The "Preliminary Discourse" cannot be well known for its only other appearance—unless I am mistaken—is in another scarce book called "The Songs and Ballads of Robert Burns: including ten never before published: with a Preliminary Discourse and Illustrative Prefaces." London: Printed for William Clark, 1823.

ENGLISH BOOKS AND AMERICAN REVIEWERS.

BY MARY AUSTIN.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mrs. Mary Austin.**

THE item which more than any other has, until the last few years, conditioned the reviewing of European books in America, is one which Europe has least appreciated. It is that journals of opinion have practically all of them been published in the extreme eastern edge of the United States. This implies not only direct contact with European influences but, to a degree hardly understood even in America, explicit European sources of opinion.

No city in the world harbours so many and so diverse types of the young Intellectual as New York, drawn there more often than not by the prospect of finding an outlet for personal expression denied at home. Youth, bumptiousness and general lack of acquaintance with American conditions, natural to the immigrant intellectual of whatever derivation, incline him to critical rather than to creative effort. Both the wish to constitute his criticism a contribution, and the instinctive antagonism to immediate American conditions,

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direct his attention toward the output of the older and more familiar civilisation. The journals of opinion, always open to writers in whom the necessity for expression is stronger than the demand for remuneration, afford the happiest hunting-ground imaginable to the youthful quest for effectiveness, with the result that literary attention not only centres on the foreign product, but literary criticism has been in the past preponderantly written by those who are, in respect to their intellectual experience, foreign to the American outlook. With the best will in the world toward the country of their election, most of the weekly and monthly journals of intellectual criticism in the United States could better be called International than American.

It is difficult for the English reader to guess anything of this from the contributor's list. He might suppose than a critic signing himself Ludwig Lewisohn is not altogether Anglo-Saxon in his origins, but how would he be able to say whether Van Wyck Brooks or Francis Hackett were the more recent importation. What he would make of such names as Heywood Broun, H. L. Mencken and Wilson Follett would depend on internal evidence wholly. Even with explicit knowledge of intellectual and racial derivations, there would be no way in which the foreign reader could be certain that any one of these had ever penetrated the American experience any farther west than Philadelphia. All that any of us would be safe in saying is that these are names which determine what will be read with literary anticipation by the rest of the country. They are not by any means an index of all that will be read, for there is a vast reading public in America which knows what it likes and has no hesitancy in saying so at the book-shop or the desk of the municipal library. There is no guarantee that an English book, which has received favourable attention at the hands of a New York reviewer of international reputation, will receive any attention whatever at the hands of the book buyer.

I am often asked by English writers who have never been in the United States, to explain the discrepancies between their New York book notices and their American royalties, which, it is sometimes necessary to assure them, do not arise in the dishonesty of American publishers. I recall how in Florence, a number of years ago, William De Morgan sought me out for the purpose of assuring himself that there was no such hidden reason for the failure of his publisher's returns to come up to the expectation excited by the extremely favourable reviews he had been getting, and the difficulty of explaining to him that New York has no such relation to the rest of my country as London has to England, or Paris to France.

At Prior's Field last summer where I lectured on the pattern of American Literature, Bernard Shaw politely but firmly declined my estimate of his formative influence on American thinking, on the ground that the amount of his American royalties indicated no such wide acquaintance with his published works as would be necessary to prove my case. It is true that Shaw reaches a large part of his public from the stage, but it is even more certain that what goes on in New York is by no means all that is going on in the mind of young America.

I have said that the chief effect of the reviewers with recognisable names, is to excite literary expectation. But the terms "literary" and "literature" have different connotations in the various levels of intellectual life in America. There is a large class who make a distinction in their own mind between literature, a taste for which is proper to be inculcated in the young, and what is technically known as "reading matter."

Literature is something that the New York critics write about, is supposed to be worthy of all praise but rather stiff to get through. Having paid the tribute of acknowledgment the average member of this class tends to occupy the rest of his time with the variety of reading matter that, according to the contract, is placed "next to" advertisements in the popular magazines.

There is another and larger class who, by way of the proposition that one man's political preference is as important to his country as any other's, has arrived at the conclusion that his literary preference is entitled to an equal consideration. To this group literature is anything they like to read, and if they like Harold Bell Wright or Ethel M. Dell, they have, in a free country, no hesitancy in saying so. To such as these the names of critics have no force, and the standing of writers like Wells and Shaw and Galsworthy is exactly as much as penetrates to them through other mediums of publicity —the daily news, the stage and the moving pictures.

This class of readers is scarcely appreciated in Europe, and has never been treated sympathetically by reviewers even in America, which seems to me a mistake. Because their lack of interest in what is called literature is not necessarily owing to native lack of intelligence or taste. The inhibition against the hieratic literary judgment is profoundly democratic in its source They object, not to reading well written and significant books, but to being told *ex cathedra* which books are significant and well written. As a matter of fact, genuine feeling for literary distinction does not seem to be any more general in England than it is in America. I am continually astounded there at hearing American books praised which will not bear up under expert technical criticism, and hearing nothing at all of books that represent the best that America has produced. So there must be a measure of naturalness in the resistance opposed by the masses to the literary dictatorship of New York, or any other intellectual capital.

Another item which stiffens this resistance in the general mind, is the association of what is technically called literature with ideas subversive of accepted political and ethical traditions. Unfortunately for the publishers' lists, these are the elements usually emphasised by the reviewers. Nothing that Shaw has ever written has so prejudiced bourgeois America against him as the fierce rejoicings of his young disciples in his handling of moral conventions, blinding readers of those rejoicings to Shaw's genuinely prophetic handling of ethical realities.

Finally, there is a class of book-buyers in the United States who will read anything which they can be persuaded is good for them—anything, that is, which demonstrates its relativity to their conscious, and conscientious, search for culture. This is a characteristic of our people too much laughed at abroad as a pretension,

as a vestigial remainder of Puritanism, as anything but what it is—the deep, instinctive movement of Democracy toward self-preservation.

It is only by a high degree of individual mastery over the technique of living that democracy can maintain itself as a going concern. The only way in which a special class can "put anything over" on the masses is by a specialised knowledge, just such specialisation as is implied in the sacerdotal attitude of the critic. So that we have in America a large class, unable of themselves to make the necessary distinction between an informed and uninformed opinion, regarding the whole caste of critics with distrust.

At the same time this group to whom democracy presents itself chiefly as a choice among experts, is pathetically eager in its quest for the hieratic marks of style and form, as certified by the critics, which determine whether or not a particular book is good for them.

Both these factors—the intellectual semi-detachment of New York, which is the source of criticism, and the preoccupation of the American public with its own successful functioning in the world of life—have contributed to the excessive attention given to foreign books in the past. This is especially the case with authors who deal with complexes of the social order. They are read in the first place because of the American interest in group phenomena, and in the second place because they leave the American reader free to contemplate the social theory unhampered by the necessity of doing anything about it.

This is the sort of thing that must be taken into account by the English author in seeking appreciations at the hands of American reviewers. Praise from them is no assurance of sales success, unless at the same time there is explicit relation of the subject-matter to American experience. I do not mean by this that it must necessarily be stated in American terms. The American public has the capacity for absorbing and digesting local colour, to a degree possessed by no other country in the world. The element of foreignness in English books is far less a barrier to intelligent appreciation in America than the foreignness of American books is a handicap to English readers. The comparatively slow rise of the works of Joseph Conrad to popularity has not been due to his unfamiliar backgrounds, but to the devotion of the first criticisms of his books to qualities of form and style rather than to Conrad's fine and genuinely American feeling for the personal adventure. Even novelists like Violet Hunt and Dorothy Richardson, whose work is crammed with English intimacies, could be made to sell in America provided the critics could be diverted from the feast of technical discriminations such books afford, long enough to tell us exactly their relation to the great American quest.

As a matter of fact there is an evident purpose on the part of the newer organs of literary opinion, such as the *Freeman* and the *Evening Post Book Review*, as well as on the part of the independent provincial centres of criticism in the Middle West, to do just that thing.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

JANUARY, 1922.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitons II, IV and V are the same each month, and that for the next two months the first prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best photograph of any scene or building that has literary associations.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR NOVEMBER—DECEMBER, 1921.

I.—The Prize for the best original Lyric is divided, and HALF A GUINEA each awarded to Winnifred Tasker, of Nythfa, Llandudno, and Margaret Brown, of 43, Welldon Crescent, Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middlesex, for the following:

THE MOOR.

Oh! never is the road too long, nor is the hill too high
That is ever climbing nearer to the wonder of the sky;
A narrow road and lonely but beyond it lies the moor,
Where the four winds all make merry and the soft rain drives before;

And who could well be lonely though with none to walk beside
With the four winds wild and wakeful and the grey rain for a guide?
Who could not well be happy there? Who is there could forget
The deep silence of the moorland when the sun has slowly set?

There when the great mists gather close and melt in clouds of rain
'Tis then to tread the moorland road with joyous steps again;
For the miles on miles of heather bedewed with jewels are
And the gay gorse bloom has stolen all the splendour of a star—

The same that gleams and trembles near the dim edge of the moor,
When the twilight plays with shadows and drives them all before;

Oh! never is the road too long, nor is the hill too high,
That goes climbing nearer—nearer to the moorland and the sky.

WINNIFRED TASKER.

I HAVE THOUGHT.

I have thought
There might be little babes in heav'n, whom God had brought
From earth before their dimpled feet should ache;
And so He called my mother up to make
A nursery in heaven for their sake!

It has seemed
There might be poor old folks in heav'n, whom God redeemed
From earth by reason of their weariness:
And so He called my mother there to bless
And comfort them with her sweet tenderness!

Sweet indeed
That God Himself should call for mother in His need!
And sweet to know her beauty heaven-set!
. . . But oh! I wonder, did the Lord forget
One little child on earth, who needs her yet?

MARGARET BROWN.

We also select for printing:

THE TEARS OF COLUMBINE.

Little tears of Columbine
Fall about the grass,
Turn to gleaming milky pearls
Where her feet shall pass.
White pearls beneath a pearl-grey sky—
Yet Columbine has passed them by.

Little tears of Columbine
Drop beside the way,
Turn to diamonds fairy-tossed
By fairy queens at play.
Beckoning lure for head and hand—
But Columbine won't understand.

Little tears of Columbine
Splash upon the path,
Grieving sorry little signs,
Love's sad aftermath.
A rosary of faithless deeds—
Ah! Columbine has told her beads.

(Doris Amy Ibbotson, 121, Lower St. James' Street, Newport, Isle of Wight.)

Though more lyrics have been received in this Competition than ever before, the quality is on the whole a little disappointing. We select for special commendation the lyrics by Margaret K. McEvoy (Cricklewood), Enid D. Woolright (Dundrum), G. Lawrence Groom (Regent's Park), Una Malleson (London, W.), J. A. B. (Highgate), Kathleen Ida Noble (Forest Rise), Lucy Malleson (London, W.) Lorna Yarde Bunyard (Mereworth), Reginald Gray (Darlington), Hilda de Fleury (London, S. W.), Eileen Edwards (Hampstead), Margery Constance Nunn (Yiewsley), J. R. Wilmot (Birkenhead), Doris Hertog (Kimberley, South Africa), Mary C. Mair (Brondesbury), Jessie Jackson (Beverley), Dorothy Fielding (Folkestone), Miss D. M. James (London, S.W.), Constance Maunsell (Monkstown, Co. Dublin), Thora Stowell (Cairo, Egypt), Miss L. A. Sunley (Christchurch, New Zealand), George Raymond Shea (Margate), Pearl Luscher (Rochester, New York), W. Maxfield Rogers (Wimbledon), Frederic Warner (Auckland, New Zealand), S. R. Noyes (Parys, Orange Free State), Mona Dickson (Paddington), J. A. Galahad (Portland, Oregon), Margaret Florence Hastings (Montreal), Margery Hunter Woods (London, W.C.), J. I. Douglas (York), Arthur C. Inman (Boston, U.S.A.), Mordaunt Currie (Little Baddow), "The Hermit of Guernsey" (Guernsey), John Peterson (Shetland), Floyd Meredith (New York).

II.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to Gwendoline M. Shaw, of 36, Warrington Road, Ipswich, for the following:

THE SURGEON'S LOG. BY JOHNSTON ABRAHAM. (Chapman & Hall.)
"No sound of hammer or of saw was there."
COWPER, *The Winter Morning Walk.*

We also select for printing:

AN ENGLISH COURSE FOR EVERYBODY. BY S. P. B. MAIS. (Grant Richards.)
"Oh, the roast beef of Old England."
R. LEVERIDGE.

(A. C. Marshall, Oakleigh, Corstorphine, Edinburgh.)

THE WANDERINGS OF A SPIRITUALIST. BY ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE. (Hodder & Stoughton.)
"Down among the Dead Men."
Old Song.

(Beryl M. Colby, St. Hilda's College, Cheltenham.)

A MAN FOUR-SQUARE. BY WILLIAM MACLEOD RAINE. (Jarrolds.)
"He'd everything a man of taste
Could ever want, except a waist."
W. S. GILBERT, *A Discontented Sugar-Broker.*

(Phyllis Moore, Waldon House, Lansdown Road, Cheltenham.)

III.—The PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best criticism of our Christmas Symposium and supplementary list of poems to be included in the Golden Treasury of the future is awarded to Geoffrey H. Wells, of 14, Essich Street, Roath Park, Cardiff, for the following:

It is curious to note how four out of the nine contributors to this symposium avoid any definite or in any way complete answer to the request, in some cases giving sweeping replies which go quite beyond its scope. Of the others, Professor Elton confines himself too much to the past, and gives only names very few of which one would wish to dispute: it would have been more interesting had his list given the titles of individual poems. In my opinion, too, poems should be included as poems only, not from any interest they may possess as manifestations of the author's genius, as Professor Walker seems to desire. In the following list I give certain poems not mentioned in the Symposium, but which would certainly have to be included:

BELLOC—"The South Country."
BROOKE, RUPERT—"The Dead," "Tiare Tahiti."
BRIDGES, ROBERT—"London Snow."
CHESTERTON, G. K.—"Lepanto," "The Praise of Dust."
DAVIES, W. H.—"Thunderstorms," "Leisure."
DE LA MARE—"A Song of Shadows."
FLECKER, J. E.—"The Old Ships."
GRENFELL, J.—"Into Battle."
KIPLING, RUDYARD—"Cities and Thrones and Powers."
OWEN, WILFRED—"Greater Love."
SQUIRE, J. C.—"To a Bulldog."
YEATS, W. B.—"When You are Old."

We also select for printing:

Imagination responds with delight to Mr. Monro's picture of a Grand Jury taking charge of the "Bible of the Race." The ordinary reader, without either the grave responsibilities or the unique privileges attaching to the chosen seven, delights to speculate round the theme—there maybe he also sees avenues of despair opening before him.

Certain names present few difficulties: but there are many problems connected with living poets. It is good to face these although in many cases the final verdict cannot yet be given.

A careful collection made now will be of interest and use say in 1970. And after it has been weeded out and the real poems safely set in the Golden Book, such an anthology will still be of value because representative of a nation's feelings: particularly during the years round about the

Great War. Already we begin to realise that much which pleased the ear or stirred the emotion when first written during this stressful time is not worthy to attain the permanency of the Treasury although of value to the historian of the time.

One or two names not mentioned in THE BOOKMAN Symposium come to my mind, among them Francis Ledwidge and Arthur Shearly Cripps. The "ordinary reader" suggests them humbly.

(Winifred Bates, General Boys' School, Bridport).

We specially commend the seven competitors who suggest that the following should be added to the Golden Treasury: "On an Air of Rameau" and "Memory," by Arthur Symons; "The Hill," by Rupert Brooke; "What is there hid in the heart of a Rose," by Alfred Noyes; "The Fugitive," by A. E., and "Dreamy, Gloomy, Friendly Trees," by Herbert Trench (N. M. Butterfield, Ilford). "Lilac Time," by Alfred Noyes; "For Ever England," by Rupert Brooke; "The Shepherdess," by Mrs. Meynell; "Drake's Drum," by Sir Henry Newbolt; Hardy's Nativity Poem; "The Seekers," by John Masefield; "The Old Stoic" and "Last Lines," by Emily Brontë; "Larks," by Katharine Tynan; "Into the Twilight," by W. B. Yeats, and "The Little Princess," by Ian Stoughton Holborn (Jessie Jackson, Beverley). "Into Battle," by Julian Grenfell, "Judgment," by Leslie Coulson; "O Fortunati," by Hugh Freston; "Evening Clouds," by Francis Ledwidge, and "Home Thoughts in Levantie," by Edward Tennant (S. S. Wright, Bromley). "The Rainbow," by Leslie Coulson (A. A. Miller, Grimsby). "The Highwaymen," by Noyes; some of Masefield's ballads and extracts from his "Reynard the Fox"; "Arabia," "The Listeners" and "The Song of Shadows," by Walter de la Mare; "Everyone Sang," by Siegfried Sassoon; "The Gates of Damascus," by Flecker; "The Vagrant," by John Drinkwater; "The Soldier," by Rupert Brooke; "In Memoriam," by Maurice Baring; "The Volunteer," by Herbert Asquith; and at least one poem each by Thomas Moult, Ralph Hodgson, J. C. Squire and Muriel Stuart (J. Shaw, Harrogate). "What shall I bring you" and "We may Not Rest," by R. E. Vernède (Hilda Fletcher, Highgate). "Pro Patria," by Owen Seaman; "November Skies," by John Freeman (Kathleen Rice, Harpenden).

IV.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best review in not more than a hundred words is awarded to G. Gordon Salmon, of Cleadon, Canterbury, for the following:

THE SECRET VICTORY. By STEPHEN MCKENNA. (Hutchinson.)

In the last volume of "The Sensationalists" we are given a judicious comment on the after-results of the war. All the characters are deftly drawn, and though Ivy Maitland is an unsatisfactory substitute for the unprincipled Barbara Neave in the earlier book, we are consoled by the further development of Eric Lane, who passes unscathed through situations that, in the hands of a less capable novelist, would be perilously near the undignified. It is a book broadly conceived, written with perfect craftsmanship, and one that, though its warning is unemphasised, must make us fear a little for the future generation.

We also select for printing:

THE GREAT WHITE SOUTH.
By HERBERT G. PONTING. (Duckworth.)

An undercurrent of truest human nature sways the writer, and Mr. Ponting is as delicate in his literary expression as he is magnificent in his photographic studies. The lone waste is portrayed with a nature lover's appreciation of the comedies and tragedies of life that makes one realise that not alone in the hearts of boys and girls will that spirit of adventure be fostered, which the author cherishes as his reward; men and women will read from cover to cover with pride that so glorious a heritage is theirs.

(Reginald May, 94, Warwick Street, Eccleston Square.)

THE IDEAS OF EINSTEIN'S THEORY.
By PROFESSOR J. H. THIRRING. (Methuen.)

There are many people who wish to acquire a knowledge of the sequence of ideas involved in the theory of Relativity, in order that they may form an opinion, and be "in the swim" of the modern controversy over Einstein's theory. This book presents the theory of Relativity in an understandable and logical form. The author has endeavoured to show how Einstein arrived at his deductions, and how the facts of physical experience, logically treated, yield the theory of Relativity; and in a simple, concise manner, explains the results. It is a book which will be welcomed by many.

(Enid Blyton, 34, Oakwood Avenue, Beckenham, Kent.)

We select for special commendation the reviews by A. R. MacPhail (Cambridge), Helen Louise Bell (Manchester), A. B. Longbottom (Derby), Winifred V. Knocker (Folkestone), John Hughes (London, S.W.), Lily Garland (Streatham), B. N Saxelby (Manchester), Christine M. Pocock (Burnham-on-Sea), Winifred Barrows (Great Malvern), J. A. Jenkins (Liverpool), Mabel Etchells (Wallasey), M. C. Smyth (Bournemouth), G. M. Elwood (Grimsby), B. Noel Saxelby (Manchester), A. M. Count (King's Lynn), N. M. Butterfield) Ilford), M. H. Dodds (Gateshead), Nancy Littlejohn (London, W.), Lilian M. Bridges (Salisbury), B. Van Thanl, junr. (Swiss Cottage), Francis Dryden (Ruislip), Harold Cross (Dudley), Gerald McMichael (Birmingham), A. E. Gowers (Haverhill), Edith Robin (London, W.).

V.—The PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BOOKMAN is awarded to Sidney J. Green, of 201, Twickenham Road, Leytonstone, E.11.

GERTRUDE PAGE.

By W. H. CHESSON.

WHEN a great musician wrote of "that brutal collection of units which poets call the crowd" he largely increased the number of "mute inglorious Miltons," but was very far from supplying a phrase to fit the multitudes who live along such lines of imagination as are laid down for them by Gertrude Page. The coloured jackets of her novels lie around me as I write. They show me the unprincipled politician about to kiss the incorruptible lady journalist, the heroic fugitive widow watching her country's wily foe from the Cornish coast, Hilary the huntress waving aloft the fox's brush, the Rhodesian police officer looking with immutable nobility into a world where his heart's hope was killed and reborn, and others (the children of Gertrude Page's brain are numerous and the jacket artists are industrious). The characterisation and incidents of her novels, and the Rhodesian local colour of several of them, have effected a sale of at least two million copies;

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and the readers implied in that number are probably more numerous than the entire population of the land of shamrocks and shillelaghs. Yet when we examine the principles and qualities illustrated by her books, the shining of unselfish love and of loyalty to spiritual ideals precludes us from poking fun at the tyranny of Duty over even a Don Juan of fifty. Several novelists would be severely handicapped if the law were to cease to interest itself in the behaviour or misbehaviour of fictitious beings, because though expert in what is timidly termed "suggestiveness," they haven't much more courage for explicitness than the rhyming biographer of the "young lady of Joppa who came a Society cropper." Gertrude Page, however, could not possibly be affected in the fundamentals of her popularity by any liberation of lusciousness, because she instinctively chooses to place an altruistic will before an attractive form and possesses at least a partially awakened cosmic consciousness which, although it betrays her into some rhetorical absurdities, makes her weigh more in the scales of philosophy than those perpendicular earthworms, however clever, who find some mean comfort in belittling humanity and ignoring evidences around them of the *rapport* between the divine and the human.

Photo by Kate Pragnell. **Gertrude Page.**

Gertrude Page, who can afford to dispense with the "professional" Miss, especially as in private life she is Mrs. Alec Dobbin, informs me that I was her earliest critic. The first to whom she confided her literary ambition was, I think, the "Ans" to whom she inscribed a penetrating study of London life entitled "Winding Paths." "Ans" was a government clerk in the same department as one of her closest friends, a sister of mine who was harried by one malady after another into an early grave. The combination of spiritual and physical beauty presented by "Ans" still haunts my memory, and her marriage, after an abnormally long engagement, was the only event of the kind which I witnessed with a complimentary reverence at all comparable with that which I should have felt if I had seen the wedding of those sublime creatures of fancy, "Jo" Lathom and Jack Desborough, who live in "Where the Strange Roads Go Down" and "Follow After." It was Ans who brought me into postal contact with Gertrude Page, then living at Woburn Sands, who had written a novel at the age of sixteen and possessed courage and inspiration enough to carry her for ten years up the hill called Difficulty to the thrones where the best sellers sit out of the draught in the heaven of success. My fair correspondent wrote a firm, flowing and legible hand. She received criticism with unfailing courtesy and discussed it thoroughly. It was not easy to read every word of "Madge," "Queen Mab" and "Proud Evelyn," but it was impossible for me not to feel that the author was one of those people whose creative power must, if favoured by industry, project some irresistibly charming person into that public dreamland termed a novel. As a matter of fact such a person was already sketched in one of the early MSS. which I was privileged to see. The public knows her as Hilary, the lovable tomboy in "The Great Splendour," a novel now in or beyond its 225th thousand.

To make a long story short, after hearing "No" in a sufficient number of keys and variations to have dissuaded Bruce's spider from pursuing its architectural labour, Gertrude Page became a contributor to the *Girl's Own Paper*, but she was still far from the day when "Gleanings from the Writings of Gertrude Page" (1920) would not have sounded to a cynic a little like a "spoof" compilation. Years passed and I woke up one morning to find Gertrude Page famous, but the first books bearing her name which I examined did not impress me as adequately representing a great reputation, though one of them was "The Edge o' Beyond," which has been successfully dramatised. Hans Andersen was a genius, but the assumption of the human voice by everything whose speech would be convenient or poetically pretty at any particular moment in his and other fairy tales, is noxious to the vitality of a different order of literature. For instance, if the reader says to me, like Gertrude Page in "The Edge o' Beyond," "In the house a little child lies dead," I am shocked. But if he adds, like her, "The grass left off playing, and stood petrified," I perforce wonder if the child is more real than the grass. Real poetry triumphs by the test of truth; sentimentality is merely exposed. Perhaps Mark Twain was cruel in classifying a variety of sentimentality as "hogwash," but there should be something terrifically sobering to sentimentalists in the mere knowledge that such an appellation exists.

When, aided by the courtesy of Messrs. Hurst & Blackett, I made a general survey of Gertrude Page's literary achievements, I found several which could only be the handiwork of a writer of admirable creativeness. Named in order of merit they are "The Great Splendour," "Paddy-the-next-best-thing," "Where the Strange Roads Go Down," with its sequel, "Follow After"; and it is worth noticing that they are all dedicated to people to whom she would obviously wish to give of her best. Another noteworthy *opus* consists of the volumes, "Jill's Rhodesian Philosophy" and "Jill on a Ranch."

To conclude, the eulogy of Gertrude Page may be thus pronounced:—Having a brave, unconventional nature, with a passionate love of open spaces and a lavish gift of humour, she was haunted by images of winsome, prankish girls loved by men of monumental constancy or indeflectible ardour. At the same time, wideawake, from girlhood up, to the activities of the selfish and sensual, she was prepared to beguile her readers into a fictitious world not too unlike fact to be plausible. Fearlessly studious of the geography of the

soul's heights, she is, from a hedonistic and imaginatively optimistic point of view, repellently enamoured of sorrow, but everybody knows that if a man by losing eyesight obtains insight, there will be people clever enough to say that physical blindness was an excellent thing—for him. She has an astonishing command of dialogue, and when her sense of humour is operative (which is of course very often) one forgives her the lack of constructive power which causes that nimble but creaky-shoed fairy Coincidence and the Being whom novelists call Fate to come to her assistance. If it be incumbent on a great author to write consistently good English, her falls are truly terrible from the viewpoint of a stylist. There is a solemn and eloquent passage in "The Rhodesian" where "infinite hunger" both "lies as a germ in every human heart" and "stands serene and steadfast as the Rock of Ages"; if I had written it the doctor would have been at my bedside next morning. It is curious how the power of gripping the imagination with no other aid but words does not necessarily accompany an even ordinary regard for the purely literary aspect of a book. And yet the many rhetorical flights in Gertrude Page's books do not leave the reader on the ground waiting for tumbles. No, they carry him with the author, however reluctantly, because her terrestrial idealism is singing in their rhythms.

Cynthia Stockley and F. E. Mills Young are contemporary names in South African literature which signify more perhaps to a purely artistic valuer of fiction than Gertrude Page, but it would be a very rash detractor who should deny the great merit of Gertrude Page's Rhodesian books. Her husband and she turned a large tract of wilderness into "perhaps the most successful and beautiful ranch in Rhodesia." She has studied with humane eyes, not too quick to smile, both black and white races. She knows and sympathises keenly with the problems of the lonely wife execrably waited on by erratic and odoriferous piccanins under conditions where the fleas are numerous, cookery a pathetic art, and the husband much more of a sportsman than a sympathetic companion. But she has the pioneer's appreciation of the scenic and atmospheric charms which are proof against occasional lions, baboons and cobras, but not against the stationary incubus of innumerable tedious streets and the swarms of covetous rivalries that feverishly throb in them. At home in Yorkshire, Ireland, Rhodesia, she can make her people live in any British setting, and who would not like to live with such people as Paddy Adair, Basil Hope, Hal Pritchard and my pet Hilary? In this age of deceit, when people have to be coaxed by legal falsehood into taking an extra hour of sunlight into their working day and when Romeo and Juliet have degenerated into people who "give the glad eye" and "get off with" the opposite sex, it is a treat to read of such womanliness and manliness, such loyalty and generosity, as flourish in the works of Gertrude Page.

New Books.

MAX BEERBOHM MEETS HIMSELF.*

Just ten years ago it was my privilege to make a survey in these pages of the works, literary and pictorial, which Mr. Max Beerbohm had by then presented to a grateful though select public. In a special article entitled "Max Beerbohm: or Art and Semolina," I, in ordinary parlance, "gave" great, though not quite unstinted praise, to a delightful satirist and caricaturist. But "ordinary parlance" was wrong. It was no case of giving. It was "Hands up!" At the point of the pistol of Mr. Beerbohm's talent I was powerless, yielding my admiration at discretion and to *force majeure*. And now Fate—or is it a good editor? or are they one and the same thing?—has put into my hands at the very moment that Mr. Beerbohm presents his latest pistol at my head, a weapon of offence and defence.

Let me deal with this weapon first, since it has been sharpened in the most sporting way by Mr. Beerbohm himself. In a foreword to "Max Beerbohm in Perspective," the author, Mr. Bohun Lynch, quotes a letter from Mr. Beerbohm deprecating Mr. Lynch's intention of writing the book at all, but begging him, if he is really determined, not "by dithyrambs to hasten the reaction of critics against" him. "My gifts are small," he adds. "I've used them very well and discreetly, and the result is I've made a very charming little reputation. But that reputation is a frail plant. Don't over-attend to it, gardener Lynch! Don't over-drench and deluge it! The contents of a quite *small* watering can will be quite enough." That is a pathetic appeal! And what has been Mr. Lynch's response? Practically he has ignored it. Dithyrambs at which Dionysos himself would have blushed! "The Caricature of the King of Spain is a spiritual caricature of the highest quality." Watering cans charged with rose-water enough to suffocate the reputation of a far greater than Mr. Beerbohm. "He touches the heights of imaginative writing." Let me hasten to say that Mr. Lynch does make a show of adverse criticism from time to time, but that I find his blame as unconvincing as his praise. That is a disservice to Mr. Beerbohm—and to his select public. But I think that the *method* of this book will do Mr. Lynch's hero even greater disservice amongst the general public whom we desire to be his admirers. In picking the plums out of Mr. Beerbohm's delightful mixed puddings Mr. Lynch has outdone Little Jack Horner himself, implanting them not in his own particular craw but in a most indigestible pudding of his own making.

But what I am really angry about is the effect that this book has had upon myself. It has rendered me actively critical just when I should have liked to be peacefully thankful. For let me at once say that "A Survey, by Max Beerbohm," had it had no precursors and had there been no Mr. Lynch, would have proved to me a very exquisite feast. Indeed, was so doing, until I began to sip Mr. Lynch's sweet champagne. Followed indigestion, flatulence and odious comparison, urged on thereto, my weapon sharpened, as I say, by another sentence in Mr. Beerbohm's letter quoted above. "Years ago," he writes to Mr. Lynch, "G. B. S. in a light-hearted moment called me 'the incomparable.' Note that I am *not* incomparable. Compare me!" Well, I take up the challenge, compelled by my admiration for Mr. Beerbohm, and proceed to compare him with his greatest rival—himself. Mr. Beerbohm is a national institution and too precious to allow me to

* "A Survey." By Max Beerbohm. 25s. (Heinemann.)—"Max Beerbohm in Perspective." By Bohun Lynch. 10s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

XUM

hold my hand now that I am fully roused. The whip will hurt the wielder of it more than it will hurt the boy. That it will not *harm* the last is the schoolmaster's humble prayer. And that I am not embittered, or even "reacted" upon by Mr. Lynch's dithyrambs, let me prove by quoting from one of my most cherished possessions—a letter which Mr. Beerbohm wrote to me ten years ago, in which as will be seen he most delightfully and good-humouredly "reacted" to my banter at his use of exotic words. The closing sentence of my article ran, "I myself have had no personal intercourse with Mr. Beerbohm. True! I once wrote him a letter. But he never answered it!" This was his reply:

"I have received to-day THE BOOKMAN, and by the last paragraph of your essay I feel myself absolved from that harsh law of literary hygeine [*sic*] which inverideed forbids a person praised in a public print to write and thank the praiser. Let there be, on this occasion, no secernment between critic and artist. For once I will be neither impenuous nor implected. Utterly apolaustic, I write to thank you for your most witty and delightful essay and to say—no, really I can't say how much pleasure it has given me. Having said, or rather *not* said this, I am brought sharply back face to face with that liberating last sentence of yours. *When* did you write to me? I am sure I never received the letter. And thus this letter I am writing is to be taken as an answer to one which fate unkindly intercepted."

That is a charming letter and no one could write ungraciously after it, but none but a coward could hold his hand because of it. I trust I shall not hit the harder because my hand is in with beating Mr. Lynch. And my remarks must be confined to the caricatures, inferior though I think them as a whole to Mr. Beerbohm's writings, because that is the task I am set. Now I am convinced that it is nonsense to say that Mr. Beerbohm is only compelled to his art by "the joyous discomfort of a procreant mind" (the phrase, far from pretty, is Mr. Lynch's) and that he is an inspired artist, quite unurged by external forces (also Mr. Lynch). He appears to me, quite on the contrary, to be much more human than that. He is the present day analogue of Dagonet, Killigrew and Archie Armstrong, who, irresponsible in theory, yet had to keep a shrewd look-out on their audiences. But his is a prouder position than theirs, for he is not merely the jester of a Court but of a People, and unless he continues to jest his occupation is gone. Which brings me to a comparison of the volume before me with those that have preceded it. One thing is of course self-evident (and Mr. Lynch has rightly pointed this out), that in the technique of drawing Mr. Beerbohm is advancing. Unfortunately technique is not what we are out for. What we want in Mr. Beerbohm is satirical inspiration, the lash of the whip. For a whipper-in-chief is as necessary to our fallen humanity as a public executioner—and infinitely harder to find. There are, I admit, fine pieces of satirical fun in this volume, notably "Mr. Lytton Strachey trying to see with Lord Melbourne's eyes," "A Study in Temptation," "Unison," "Mr. Hewlett being photographed," "Blame the Cloth," "Sir Philip Sassoon," "An Enigma in 1920," "Sir Claude Phillips 'going on,'" "The Old Adam," "A Chill," "The Cecils Cross Over," "The King of Spain," "Lord Spencer," and above all, "Somewhere in the Pacific," enough to make any other Jester's reputation, and ensuring, I trust, a vast sale for a delightful book.

By Max Beerbohm. **"The Cecils Cross Over."**
From "A Survey" (Heinemann).

But there is not the priceless cruelty that informs the far more faulty drawings in "The Poet's Corner," the caricatures in the *Tatler* and other papers before the war, and the Pre-Raphaelite series not yet published. I have no doubt that Mr. Beerbohm feels, as Mr. Lynch suggests, more kindly towards his fellows as he advances in years. But I submit that kindliness is out of place at the Whipping Stock or at the Gallows. We need to have our foibles, our naughtinesses, our insincerities, our contemptibilities, beaten, if needs be choked, out of us. And Mr. Beerbohm has rightly (with the Hangman) obtained the charter for the doing of it. Doubtless to a kind-hearted man Jack Ketch's was a painful business, but he went through with it manfully. I do beg of Mr. Beerbohm not to give up his whip but to beat us with gusto, although—in the seclusion of Rapallo—he may weep at the sad necessity. Do, Mr. Beerbohm, go on "being rude" (your own words). You can "charge the scroll" with punishment better than anyone. Leave to us (and our spiritual advisers) the mastering of our fate. That is my message.

I am fully aware that I may be charged with ungraciousness in looking a gift horse—and a magnificent one—in the mouth, when I should have been on his back enjoying a gallop. But that must be risked.

Let me, in conclusion, make such amends as are possible by heartily recommending all who have, or have not, twenty-five shillings to spare to become possessed of this latest product of Mr. Beerbohm's delightful pencil, fully assured (for in these bad times we must keep an eye on the market) that the time is not far distant when it will command a most satisfactory premium.

G. S. LAYARD.

SUCCESS.*

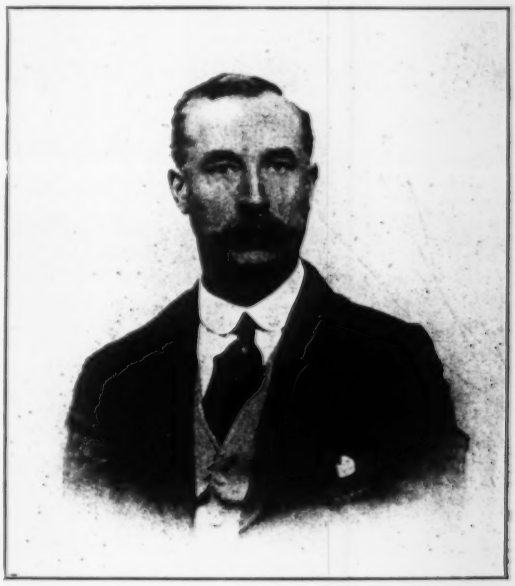
Probably no two persons would agree in dealing with so difficult a theme as "Success," since opinions as to what constitutes success in this world differ as widely as the poles. Give one man a book, a pipe, and a fireside, and he is perfectly happy; to another—maybe his own brother—such a fate would spell boredom intolerable. Give one man a stout ship well found in stores, Antarctic seas, and the ice-blink in front of him, and he begins to enjoy life; another finds his choicest hours controlling financial operations in a mahogany appointed office. Lord Beaverbrook cleverly edges away from this problem of definitions by admitting that he writes for the young man whose aim it is to "get on" in business—to make money. "It is the first £10,000 which counts," he says calmly, taking our breath away and making our flesh creep avariciously. "There is the real struggle, the test of character" (we beg to disagree there!) "and the warranty of success. Youth and strength are given to us to use in that first struggle, and a man must feel those early deals right down to the pit of his stomach if he is going to be a great man of business. They must shake the very fibre of his being as the conception of a great picture shakes an artist." Ah dear! Not to all of us is it given to shake the golden apples from the tree with such delightful ease; but then, very luckily, not all of us want to. "Shelley had genius," says Lord Beaverbrook, "but he would not have been a success in Wall Street." That is just the point—he didn't want that sort of success, so the argument must fail when specific instances are given in this vein.

Having underscored our most pertinent comment, we may proceed to admit that much of Lord Beaverbrook's advice to young men who desire riches, and the sense of power which they find in great possessions, is invaluable. "What are the qualities which make for success?" he asks. "They are three: Judgment, Industry, and Health, and perhaps the greatest of these is judgment." His chapters entitled "Moderation," "Arrogance," "Courage," "Panic," "Depression" and "Calm" are admirable essays in miniature, though, according to the scheme of the book, we are aware that always the eye is on "the main chance." Yet after all, and in spite of the finest advice of business magnates, is it possible to turn a young man into a money-making organism? We wonder; and we wonder again if it is worth while. Some few are "made that way"; they can no more help making money than a poet can help writing, or an artist help painting; it is simply their form of self-expression. For the rest of us, we go about our various lawful occasions, making a little money by the way, and are passably happy; and, by leave of Lord Beaverbrook, we are in the great majority, and so do not lack for companionship and comradeship, and the gentle arts that to us make life worth living. Let us then leave it at that, and be content with "Success"—as we prefer it.

WILFRID L. RANDELL.

VISIONS.†

It is a quarter of a century since "God and the Ant" made its appearance, the first in a remarkable series of little books with which Mr. Coulson Kernahan took the town by storm. One might perhaps put it more correctly by saying he took the world by storm; for those books sold by hundreds of thousands and were translated into nearly a score of languages. They furnished themes for many pulpits; they were amazingly popular, yet the critics crowned them with praise; nearly everybody read them, and those who did not could not help hearing about them. When such an instant and far-reaching success comes to any man, the prophets naturally shake their heads and say it won't last; you remember how one of them—quite a distinguished one—said that because Dickens's fame had gone up like a rocket it was bound to come down like the stick. No enthusiasm can, of course, keep up its first white heat for good; generally it cools rapidly, is presently lost in the blaze of a new enthusiasm and forgotten, or recollected only as a past sensation. A happier fate seems to have been reserved for Mr. Kernahan. New movements have come, and dazzled and deafened us, and gone; the modern world has advanced so immeasurably that it is sometimes said to have outgrown nearly all its interest and belief in that faith on which those booklets of Mr. Kernahan are founded. Yet when they were collected a few years ago into one volume, entitled "Visions," a new public was ready for them, and their vogue still continuing, they have now been reissued again, with additions, as "Visions Old and New."



Mr. Coulson Kernahan.

You will appreciate the full significance of this if you can recall some of the many books that met with something of the same reception in the latter years of last century and have already gone into the wallet in which Time carries on his back alms for oblivion. Their lives were so short perhaps because they appealed to some passing taste that was soon to grow old-fashioned and die; and Mr. Kernahan has appealed to those deeper, more abiding human interests that are too fundamental ever to change more than superficially, and too old ever to be old-fashioned. These stories and sketches of his are a dreamer's interpretations of the mystery of life and death and the secrets that lie beyond the grave; he sees through the shows of things to the indwelling spirit, and finds light in the dark places, order in apparent chaos, and God ruling where there had seemed to be nothing. He is not so much concerned with vindicating the teachings of Christianity as with vindicating the teachings of Christ. He is a visionary, and puts into parables and poignantly imaginative allegories the truth as it reveals itself to him, the spiritual philosophy he has drawn from musing on the laws and character of Christ and the light that is in His words. They are still, as they were a quarter of a century ago, tracts for the times, written with a profound sincerity, a creative imagination and a simplicity and quiet beauty of thought and expression that make them unique among literature of their kind. Their spiritual insight, their message of hope will comfort and strengthen many in these years of sorrowful memories; no finer sermons were ever preached, nor any that were less like what are commonly called such.

F. H. L.

* "Success." By Lord Beaverbrook. 2s. 6d. (Stanley Paul.)

† "Visions Old and New." By Coulson Kernahan. 7s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

THREE POETS.*

They are not new writers, these three; but there is a certain novelty beyond the day of publication in their latest contributions to poetry. And it is more marked because of vivid differences of style that serve to enhance their intrinsic individual qualities.

Mr. Clifford Bax has written other verse-books, artistic and fantastic, but he never wrote before as he has done in "The Traveller's Tale," which is a kind of modern Pilgrim's Progress, written from the psychological aspect of the world. That world is viable; and he sets out to explore it, and in a pilgrim sense to save it for its very life's sake and for his own:

"Thought by thought
I build up long-lost memories of the world,
Of sky and sun, cities and trees and men"—

At length the subtle shell of the ego that holds him breaks asunder, and he finds himself and discerns the over-soul of the sensual world and the hope of its deliverance. But the way is long for this traveller. Child of the ages, he begins far back in time. He is a primitive savage in the first episode of this ages-long intermittent epic; next he is reborn into a Babylonian house, and a magician shows him man's seal of death and red escape. Then again it is the volcanic force of love, or the collision of empires when Chosroës was king of kings, that cross his experience. The last episode but one brings him nearer home—to a Cotswold town—where he is a parson without divinity to guide him; and last of all comes the voyage that leads him to the glimpse of the blest region, and the final deliverance. It is a clear conceived fable of man's time on earth and his destiny, and the manner of its telling is subtle and often eloquent. Where I think it suffers most as poetry is from the writer's determination to realise his epic theme subjectively, first of all, and to make the poetic idea secondary to it.

In his book of "Music" Mr. John Freeman is often narrative too. In one poem, "St. Bartholomew," he has used that noblest of old London churches as another time-talisman to prove the eternal heritage, and he might almost appear to be writing a sequence to Mr. Bax's book. He recalls the past; the ancient wildness is restored, and Smithfield is fields again:

". . . So with uncertain tread
From crumbling stone to stone silent I stepped,
There in a shallow valley the ruin spread,
And unimprisoned there the clear Fleet slipped,
A gleaming rivulet with whispered rushes."

Men and women, they are all gone. But one old man he recovers from time, who discovers the secret of the dreams of mortal men looking for their eternity, and the night looking for the stars and the dawn of day. The old man's invocation at the close is impressive:

"O thou lost Muse, or silent or unseeing
Whom Spring hath lacked and languid Winter wanted,
Thee have the rivers mourned, and the winds fleeing
Moaned after, thro' forsaken cities haunted
In all their wreck by mute pale memories."

The harmonising finale comes from the organ, heard above the noises of street and market outside, as they bring back reality to the dreamer. This is grave music, with the immemorial church informing it, as if Rahere were finding a voice. But in the book are many fresh and delightful melodies along with the organ fugues and sequences, as in the song of the Black Poplar:

"Black poplar-boughs are bare, and comb
With their sharp spines the stooping cloud,
Rain falls in gusts, like the torn foam
When the west wind is loud."

or in the ghostly tune:

"Now the pied spaniel whines,"

in which an arrested melody calls up the death-chamber illusion, with the dog's dread of the unknown for cue.

In other pages it seems doubtful why Mr. Freeman called his book "Music." At times he even seems afraid of it and puts in clamorous discords and cart-wheel cadences. For instance, after the rare image of a cry that kept sounding like new snow falling upon deep, soft snow, he writes:

"Last the wrangling hushed,
And I stepped lightlier, and unfearful brushed
Sharp spiny bramble through and pale uncurling frondage crushed."

There is worse than this in the poem called "The Harp," which begins:

"I the Muse am."

It is hard to believe some passages of it came from the same song-smithy as the sonnet on "Change" and the best lyrics of Book I.

Miss Sackville-West has another mode altogether. She does not so much seize upon things as let them seize upon her; and then as it were by sheer lyrical good-luck her joyous thoughts follow. Her spirit is confessed in her quatrains to Eve, for whom she built a castle in air:

"A windy palace most fantastical,
Whose halls stood full of light and resonance,"

or in those of her cycle of "Insurrection":

"Yet much is merry in men's moods diverse,
I am no mystic, I, that I should preach;
With lips string-drawn as tight as miser's purse,
Dispense their wisdom by my scrannel speech."

Valiancy, great gaiety, a touch of defiance, and then a sure sense of the pity of death: all these are in her intrepid individual verse. She can paint a landscape in three lines; she can do a mad-song, remembering Herrick; she can make ghosts of the Leopards at Knole. Her book is a tonic for a moody reviewer on a December afternoon who would give his ears to have written the passage from a Wealden Diary on a January day, or her Arcady in England.

But all three books, adjusted as they are to different planes, and to utterly different estimates and expectations of the world, are in their way stimulative and not the less because their writers are in many respects poetically at odds.

ERNEST RHYS.

* "The Traveller's Tale." By Clifford Bax. 6s. (Oxford: Blackwell)—"Music: Lyrical and Narrative Poems." By John Freeman. 7s. 6d. (Selwyn & Blount.)—"Orchard and Vineyard." By V. Sackville-West. 6s. (John Lane.)

PHYSIC AND FICTION.*

This is the fascinating title of an unusual kind of book. The writer discusses such questions as: "Whether health certificates are necessary for eugenic marriages"; "Whether the profession of medicine is unduly or sufficiently controlled"; "Whether secret poisoning is on the increase." On the first point he sums up his opinion thus:

"We do not, as yet, know enough about the diseases that are hereditary, nor can we predict with sufficient surety what the result upon the future generation will be of the marriage of those where hereditary taint is possible, to make compulsory medical inspection before marriage a trustworthy guide."

The chapter concerning the knotty point, entitled "They all lived happy ever after," will help to clear the minds of many doubtful people.

One of the most valuable sections in a most valuable book is that called "Medicine in Fiction." Sir Squire Sprigge is justly angry with the novelist who creates a situation in which a devoted young woman remains by a sufferer's pillow hour after hour, and day after day, till she wins a hand-to-hand fight with fate, and secures, by her importunity, the life of her patient.

"She is a figment," remarks our author. "For in the hospitals all nurses go to their meals and their beds at stated times. . . . Nurses do not deserve ridicule, and it makes them ridiculous to describe their share in the organisation so untruthfully as has been done. Patients, fooled by fiction, have thought that a broken leg or a scalp wound would entitle the sufferer to the exclusive possession, night and day, of a soft-voiced ministering angel; and have resented their particular angel going to her tea."

Now, what has Sir Squire to say of particular novelists? Scott, George Eliot (who does not remember Lydgate?)

* "Physic and Fiction." By Sir Squire Sprigge. 12s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

and Stevenson have, he acknowledges, spoken nobly on the side of the medical profession. The best description of cholera is in Charles Kingsley's "Two Years Ago." "Kingsley gives a very good account of the dirt of the place, of the pig-headedness of the people." Henry James and Marion Crawford have handled malaria well, and there is the episode of the Valley of Eden in "Martin Chuzzlewit," also well done. Heart disease, we are given to understand, is eminently the novel-writer's favourite. It is so extremely useful in killing off troublesome characters whose part is already played. But only one novel is mentioned in this connection with favour—"Une Vie," by de Maupassant. Lovers of Dickens will enjoy the essay on his medicine, and the note on "Dr. Goodenough."

We have no space in which to indicate all the richness of this delightful book, but we cordially commend it to the doctor, to the nurse, to the budding author, and to all interested in hospitals. We heartily endorse Sir Squire's plea for the wider endowment of medical teachers. Lectureships, readerships, fellowships—all are wanted for the instructors.

THE PESSIMISM OF HENRIK IBSEN.*

Ibsen is not played in the theatre of to-day, but it was Ibsen who created the modern theatre. Before his time the stage was a place devoid of intellectual interest; its discussion of social problems concerned only sexual intrigue. With the rise of Henrik Ibsen drama became a real reflection of life—not only of the life of external action, but of the hidden battles of the soul. Ibsen may have served his purpose; but let it not be forgotten how high that purpose was. Few dramatists have ever had such deeply-marked influence on their contemporaries as the author of "Emperor and Galilean."

Mr. Janko Lavrin, a distinguished Serbian writer, has given the world the best contemporary psychological study of the work of a world-master in "Ibsen and his Creation." Lavrin's analysis of the constituents of the Ibsen themes is an extraordinarily able exposition of the purposes of a baffling playwright.

Students of Ibsen have been puzzled and chagrined by his contradictions, his shifting standards of art, his varying views of ethics. Mr. Lavrin thinks that these weaknesses were due to Ibsen having no sense of an Absolute Value. One would rather say that his drama of affirmation conquered by negation is an *ignis fatuus* springing from disbelief in the existence of God. In the text of the plays the Christian belief is suggested, but the logical trend of them is towards a despairing scepticism.

In Ibsen's world the individual himself is the arbiter of conscience and the judge of conduct; but where each man is his own providence these egotistical ethics clash. In addition there is a large section of humanity, Ibsen's "Compact Majority," who are indifferent to truth and honesty and hold fast to those conventions which mask their dishonours. The result is that the upright individualist, with his fixed standard of personal rectitude—which may or may not be the real way of truth—despairs of an earth which makes spiritual perfection impossible.

Truly does Lavrin write:

"The closer Ibsen looked at the enigma of man and life the more haunted he was by it; and whenever he tried to find a safe refuge in 'positive' ideas or ideals, his inner honesty compelled him to undermine, sooner or later, his own refuge. He is not a convinced idealist, but only a Tantalus of ideals."

Again:

"Among modern spirits Henrik Ibsen may be pointed out as a typical instance of the highly developed moral consciousness, allied to a feeble, almost non-existent, religious consciousness."

In "Brand" we have Ibsen's Superman—"Brand is myself in my best moments," he naïvely said. Here is a character whose supreme asset is his tremendous Will; but at the moment when its manifestation is most necessary it fails, and Brand is jeered at, stoned and deserted by his incensed followers.

In "Peer Gynt" Ibsen dropped the theory of the conquering Ego, and set forth that a true self-realisation could be achieved only by harmony with our "Master's intention"; but how is a non-religious man to arrive at a religious self-assertion—especially if there be a doubt, as there is in most of Ibsen's concepts, as to which is the Master and which is the Man.

Peer Gynt is really Rudyard Kipling's "Tomlinson," who was fit for neither heaven nor hell by reason of lukewarmness of soul. The exact similarity can be seen when the Button-Moulder (the Devil) says to Peer, defending himself against total annihilation, and pleading for the torments of hell instead on the ground that his sins are no worse than those of other people:

> "Why, that is precisely the rub, my man!
> You're no sinner at all in the higher sense;
> That's why you're excused all the torture-pangs,
> And, like others, land in the casting-ladle!"

Ibsen desired truth in every relationship in life, and in his coldly scientific examination of society arrived at a terrible negative. As Jankrin declares of that bewildering play, "The Wild Duck," which impels all but the Complete Ibsenite to laughter in its most serious scenes: "He soon reached that region where life and falsehood are so organically interwoven that the destruction of falsehood would imply the destruction of life itself."

There is no phrase of Ibsen's more quoted than the famous one, which sounds as if it came from the lips of Nietzsche, "The strongest man is he who stands alone." Is Dr. Stockman, in "An Enemy of the People," not really a weakling? It is true that he fiercely declaims, "All who live upon lies should be exterminated like vermin"; but he also musingly admits that "A normally constituted truth lives, as a rule, seventeen or eighteen years; at the outside, twenty; seldom longer." The supposedly intrepid Stockman does not even believe in his own gospel.

In "Rosmersholm" Ibsen tries another grapple with life. His ex-pastor, Johannes Rosmer, proclaims: "I know no Christian morality. I know no other morality than I have within me." The implication is that Rosmer will be happy in his own self-reliant conscience. Nothing of the kind. His sickly morbidity infects the emancipated Rebecca West, who congratulated herself that she was "beyond good and evil"; and on their wedding night the cheerful couple drown themselves in the mill-race where Rosmer's wretched wife had previously met her death. No wonder Rebecca complained:

"My old undaunted will has had its wings clipped here. It is crippled! The time is passed when I had courage for anything in the world. I have lost the power of action, Rosmer. . . . It is the Rosmer view of life that has infected my will. And made me sick. Enslaved me to laws that had no power over me before."

I believe Ibsen expressed his whole desolating philosophy of existence in the words of Mrs. Alving:

"I almost think we are all of us ghosts. It is not only what we have inherited from our father and mother that 'walks' in us. It is all sorts of dead ideas, and lifeless old beliefs, and so forth. They have no vitality, but they cling to us all the same, and we cannot shake them off. Whenever I take up a newspaper, I see ghosts gliding between the lines. There must be ghosts all the country over, as thick as the sands of the sea. And then we are, one and all, so pitifully afraid of the light."

It was in his struggle against this fear that Ibsen became a dramatist. In all his dramatic writings there is that conflict of ideas which is the very heart's blood of the life of the theatre.

LOUIS J. MCQUILLAND.

* "Ibsen and His Creation." By Janko Lavrin. 7s. 6d. (Collins.)

EUROPE AFTER THE WAR.*

Mr. Stephen Graham has gone from Dan to Beersheba—or rather from Athens to Paris—only to find everything barren. Europe—judged by its capitals—is bankrupt, overcrowded, seething with hatred and suspicion, and hag-ridden by the stupidest and most fanatical forms of nationalism. The multiplication of passports and visas, the gambling on the different rates of exchange, and the

* "Europe—Whither Bound?" By Stephen Graham. 10s. 6d. (Thornton Butterworth.)

XUM

indifference to the starvation of Russian peasants on the Volga and of Russian nobles and intellectuals at Constantinople, are symptomatic of the universal refusal of aid between nations. And the *fontes et origines malorum* are, of course, the European War and the Treaty of Versailles. The Russians have got Constantinople at last. There are 100,000 of them there, without money and without clothes. The Armenians and the Spanish Jews have bought up all their valuables. And the city, ruled by a British general, contains five times as many people as it can house. At Constantinople a pound sterling will keep you for a day. At Sophia it will maintain you for a week. But you probably won't want to stay that long at the Bulgarian capital; for the people, though simple men and good fighters, are no more altruistic than the Greeks, for whom no nation in Europe has a good word. Belgrade contains more cripples than any other capital, Berlin, now a slum *en bloc*, coming a good second. It is to the credit of the Serbians that they have shown themselves grateful to their liberators. Many exiled Russians have obtained administrative posts in Belgrade. But the erection of the great Jugo-Slavian Kingdom has not yet resulted in a fusion of races; for the Croats and Slovenes, with their Austrian culture, have proved far from assimilable. Budapest still hankers after its ex-king, Karl, and resents the alienation of Hungarian territory to Serbia, Rumania and the Czechs. The Magyars are a fighting people, quite implacable. Moreover, like the Germans, they are prepared to work. Vienna may starve eventually; but the time is not yet. Meanwhile the city has increased in population since the war. Its cafés, restaurants and theatres are full; while there are long queues outside the Wechselstuben, or money-changing offices. The Austrians favour a union with Hungary or Germany. As the Poles are the weakest and the most provocative of the new powers, with one friend only, France, so the people of Bohemia are the strongest and most capable. The Czechs have shown their independence in two ways, by renouncing allegiance to the Pope, and setting up a National Catholic Church, and by abandoning the German language, and encouraging the teaching of English. Not that they love the English over much, but that they admire the Americans and ex-President Wilson. The Germans, however, are popular in Italy where, ship-less themselves, they help largely to manage the Italian shipping. There will be no Bolshevist revolution in D'Annunzio's country, which is now quite prosperous; for the cult of Communism was destroyed by the English trade agreement with Krassin. The peasants and proletariat are well-to-do, and the country is well stocked with coal. London is a hopeless city. It interests itself first of all in sport, secondly in divorce cases, thirdly in strikes, fourthly in the Anti-Waste crusade, fifthly in Ireland, and then perhaps in the state of Europe. In Paris, the people are naturally self-conscious in a pre-eminent degree. France stands higher than she has done at any time since that of Napoleon. She has a supreme contempt for the idealism of England and America, and is firmly resolved on the disarming and dismantling of Germany. But France's greatest vice and weakness is avarice. It is her penuriousness, meanness, and exaggerated thrift that stand most in the way of her material greatness now. She wants to fill the rôle of the greatest nation in Europe; but she shrinks from spending the necessary money.

LEWIS BETTANY.

CAROLINE POETS*

The long-desired third volume of Professor Saintsbury's "Minor Poets of the Caroline Period," containing Cleveland, King, Stanley, Flatman and Whiting, is perhaps the most interesting of the set. One of the main objects of this great collection of minors, as the editor remarks in his introduction to one of them, was to present a certain kind of heroic poem, and this certainly is the sole justification for including Nathaniel Whiting's nauseous "Albino and Bellama." But the new volume contains less of heroic poetry than the others, and is delightful by reason of other qualities than those which Professor Saintsbury himself deplores in Whiting.

Cleveland is the most vigorous of the Caroline bards now presented, and I am inclined to think that, besides a crude and incondite satirical energy, he has a finer poetical value than his editor allows him. In a "corpus of metaphysical poetry" such light and bright versing as this must not be deprecated:

> "As spiders travel by their bowels spun
> Into a thread, and, when the race is run,
> Wind up their journey in a living clew,
> So is it with my poetry and you.
> From your own essence must I first untwine,
> Then twist again each panegyric line.
> Reach then a soaring quill that I may write,
> As with a Jacob's staff, to take her height."

Take him at his worst, and still his worst is amusing:

> "The sea's too rough for verse; who rhymes upon't
> With Xerxes strives to fetter th' Hellespont"—

a couplet that comes from an elegy upon that Edward King for whom "Lycidas" was written. Triumph of frigidity! cries the editor; but something of this elegy lingered on the affectionate ear of Charles Lamb, for when he wrote upon the astonishing disappearance of George Dyer into the New River, did he not quote Cleveland:

> "But can his spacious virtue find a grave
> Within the imposthumed bubble of a wave?"

It is easy to quote from Cleveland, even without knowing him, one famous couplet being found in his fierce and vivid "The Rebel Scot":

> "Had Cain been Scot, God would have changed his doom;
> Not forced him wander but confined him home."

The same humour informs another poem, "The Scots' Apostacy," which is lit by a fine line (addressed to the wandering but now to be restricted Scot):

> "Live cherished only by the Northern Star."

And I cannot forbear transcribing a single brief passage for evidence that Cleveland was truly a poet and not merely a political satirist; a passage from "An Elegy upon King Charles the First, murdered publicly by his Subjects":

> "Let nought then pass for music but sad cries,
> For beauty bloodless cheeks and blood-shot eyes.
> All colours soil but black; all odours have
> Ill scent but myrrh, incens'd upon this grave."

Henry King, author of "Tell me no more how fair she is," has hitherto been but slightly known, and the hundred pages which the present volume spares for him are excellently used. He has a better style than that of his neighbours in the book—witness "Ice may relent to water in a thaw," and

> ". . . One whose fading day
> Like to a dedicated taper lay
> Within a tomb, and long burnt out in vain,
> Since nothing there saw better by the flame."

King, like Cleveland, wrote a long elegy upon the martyr Charles, and like Cleveland used the couplet, but used it with a skill and frequent beauty which Cleveland could not approach. The elegy does not lose in power or dignity by reason of King's note at the end—"From my sad Retirement, March 11, 1648." Years had to pass before a Stuart was restored to his throne and King to his bishopric.

It is for Thomas Flatman that Professor Saintsbury's chief warmth is reserved—perhaps rightly. His "Ode on the Death of the Earl of Ossory" deserves its prime place, and not only for lines like:

> "Lament, lament, you that dare Honour love,
> And court her at a noble rate."

* "Minor Poets of the Caroline Period." Volume III. Edited by George Saintsbury, M.A. 16s. (Clarendon Press.)

But Professor Saintsbury omits to remark the beauty of "Retirement," an ode in the time of the plague:

"In the mild close of an hot summer's day,
When a cool breeze had fann'd the air,
And heaven's face look'd smooth and fair;
Lovely as sleeping infants be,
That in their slumber smiling lie
Dandled on their mother's knee,
You hear no cry,
No harsh, nor inharmonious voice,
But all is innocence without a noise:
When every sweet, which the sun's greedy ray
So lately from us drew,
Began to trickle down again in dew;
Weary, and faint, and full of thought,
Though for what cause I knew not well,
What I ail'd I could not tell,
I sate me down at an aged poplar's root,
Whose chiding leaves excepted and my breast,
All the impertinently busied world inclin'd to rest."

There is an individual sweetness here for which any age of readers—Caroline, Georgian or post-Georgian—must be grateful. Something other than gratitude may be felt for the lapdog servilities with which Flatman (but not Flatman alone) behymned an egregious Charles the Second. At best it is the gross absurdity that strikes you in reading:

"When Charles the Merciful did reign,
That Golden Age, when void of cares,
All the long summer's day,
We atoms in his beams might sport and play"—

and an apostrophe to James the Second:

"Dread Prince! whom all the world admires and fears."

The poets in this volume are much occupied with elegy and satire, and in form are fondest of the irregular ode and the heroic couplet. To compare them with their contemporary betters, with Milton and Marvell, with Cowley and Vaughan, with Dryden and Crashaw, is to see clearly their true proportions. They are neither great nor negligible, and now that they are exposed to the general reader, admiration will follow and due enjoyment of delights. And the present occasion reminds us that for great enterprises such as this collection of Minor Caroline Poetry we must still look to an old University press. It is a further satisfaction to record the sustained excellence of material production, despite the long breach of the war. Professor Saintsbury's part in the edition, both in choice and annotation, is hardly to be overpraised; and could he but have forgone his spatter of jocosities there would not be room for the faintest qualification of our thanks.

JOHN FREEMAN.

IMMATURE INDISCRETIONS*

All the young men just now appear to be writing their reminiscences. This is perhaps as well. The sooner some of them exhaust their stock and relapse into predestined silence the better for all of us. Mr. George Moore has much to answer for. His famous autobiographical trilogy, with its childlike candour and innocent indiscretions, is so easy to read that the very young feel sure it must be easy to write. Hence the flood of immature improprieties. The very young have failed to discover that Mr. George Moore is perhaps the most deliberately cunning of all our writers, a most accomplished artist, at home in two literatures and master of every trick of literary technique. He writes as easily as Pachmann plays; but think of what lies behind that ease! Mr. George Moore has spent thirty years or so in learning how to write "Hail and Farewell"; our innocent young men imagine they can do it as soon as they are out of the Sixth Form.

Mr. Hesketh Pearson is the latest recruit to the ranks of those engaged in showing up their contemporaries.* He seems to have been a writer and an actor and several other things, and now proceeds to give his views of famous men and the fathers who begat him. Needless to say that he is cheeky and determined to be irreverent at any cost. Thus, feeling impelled to write about Mr. Lytton Strachey, he begins by discussing biography in general, declares that biographical art did not begin to exist in this country till 1910, dismisses Boswell's "Johnson" airily as "a masterpiece of the Insignificant," assures us that "Lockhart, Foster, Froude and the rest (poor innocent souls) . . . all told at great length everything about their heroes that no one wanted to know," and thus continues:

Mr. Hesketh Pearson.

"Quietly, in the year 1910, the first great biographical work of art in the English language was finished. . . . The author, Frank Harris, had recreated his subject, Oscar Wilde, and unfolded the astounding drama, with an unequalled intimacy, power, vividness and truth. It established an epoch in literary history and created a biographical tradition in its kind."

That was the "first great biographical work of art in the English language." The second was "Eminent Victorians." Now I wonder how Mr. Lytton Strachey, who happens to be a scholar, versed specially in the great age of French literature, likes being praised in these terms?

Mr. Hesketh Pearson will be sure to receive plenty of applause for his irreverence. He can therefore afford to do without praise from me, and so I propose to tell him that such a paper as his "Stephen Phillips" is something very like an outrage. I propose to tell him that the only readable pages of his book are those containing the words of other men—the fantasias of Tree, the letters of Frank Harris and the letters of Bernard Shaw, who must certainly be a miracle of patience and kindliness. I propose to tell him further that he does not yet know how to write, and apparently doesn't know that he doesn't know. He will, of course, attach no importance to anything I say, so I will transcribe the opening paragraph of his paper on Sir Francis Galton as a specimen, and ask him to submit it to his soul's idol, Mr. Shaw, who really does know something about writing. Thus Mr. Pearson:

"The most difficult art in the world is the art of understanding your fellow man. Sympathy has to be almost abnormally developed in order to do so. And you must begin the study by trying to understand yourself. In literature, the paucity of great biographies is sufficient evidence of the difficulty, and the negligible quantity of great autobiographies throws a flood of light on the significance of this."

I tell Mr. Pearson quite seriously that the man who can write, print and pass paragraphs like that simply does not know what writing is and is therefore incapable of criticising it.

Mr. Pearson cannot criticise and cannot write; but he can report very well. The parts of his book in which he utters opinions have no value at all; the parts in which he reports certain things he has seen and heard are very entertaining. It is a long time since I have read anything funnier than his account of Tree's monological conversations or the description of an actor's committee meeting at Drury Lane presided over by George Alexander. I shall not be surprised if his indiscretions provoke a shower of injunctions, and I therefore advise readers who want to be amused by the failings of popular favourites to read this book while they can.

GEORGE SAMPSON.

* "Modern Men and Mummers." By Hesketh Pearson. 10s. 6d. net. (Allen & Unwin.)

XUM

WAY OF REVELATION.*

There have been many occasions when, reading a novel, we have been aware of the author at his work, constructing plot, evading difficulties, carefully drawing his story to its conclusion. There have been fewer occasions when the story has moved, like some fine, natural process, gravely and steadily, irresistibly, towards its inevitable end, the author being a mere accessory—a needful recording medium. Not for many moons and many novels have we received this latter impression so strongly as when reading "Way of Revelation." It is a big thing; a novel of note among the published thousands of ordinary interest; it holds a strange reserve of power and tragic emotion; its observation and penetration are free from all reproach of smartness or betrayed effort. That it should be a "war novel" makes its triumph all the more sure, while all the more surprising; but the battle-fields of France and Flanders, so wonderfully, poignantly described, are here seen as the playgrounds of elemental forces contending for the souls and bodies of poor human victims. Of two of those victims, principally, the story tells, bringing them on the stage as young society philanderers, apparently useless, at a ball in midsummer, 1914, and tracing their lives through the years of terror when thousands of such men passed severest tests of moral and physical courage, joked in the face of death, and heartened others by their example. In a story running to more than 500 pages there are of course many characters; in none of them can the author's skill be said to falter, but in Adrian Knoyle and Eric Sinclair it is at its highest. They are not made Greek gods; they are simply ordinary fellows, falling in love, dancing when opportunity comes, dabbling in literary matters and sampling the strange exotic fads and coteries of London; therefore they live, talk, act, and are not dull. Rosemary, the girl whom Adrian loves, is a weakling, blown upon by every warm wind of fashion and fancy; she is not strong enough to resist the enticements of a noxious poet of the erotic type, and there is a tense scene when Adrian, rushing impetuously home on leave, hears them in conversation together and receives almost a death-blow. He seeks death, in fact, after this cruel disaster to his ideals, but death comes to his chum Eric instead, and Adrian lives, wounded in body and spirit, to find happiness later with the calm, steadfast woman whom Eric had loved. Farther than this vague sketch we shall not follow the plot. It has many fine episodes, both of war and peace. Without reserve, we can "place" Mr. Ewart's work among the distinguished, the novels that matter; strong because the personality behind it is strong; a living record that will mean much to all who lived and worked, and hoped and despaired, and lost faith and found it, during those five unforgettable years.

RELATIVITY.†

It is forty-two years since Professor Tyndall's Belfast Address marked the highest tide of materialistic thought and certitude; but how far off and remote does it seem to lie now in the history of the human mind? The day of materialism has yielded its place utterly, and this is filled by many things, but most of all by rumours of the Spirit and echoes of a coming reign which looks like that of the Spirit in all the realms of thought. At least the old icons have fallen and the old false gods are dead. It is also the day of Einstein and "the reign of relativity." As an observer of marvellous acuteness and patience, Darwin is of immortal memory, but natural selection and the descent of man, as explained by him, have "folded their tents like the Arabs," while in the accepted understanding of the term there are moments when it looks perilously as if evolution itself, weighed in certain balances, were being found wanting, like that crowd of strange guests at the Chemical Nuptials of Christian Rosy Cross. In this, his latest and perhaps most remarkable contribution to the deep searchings of thought, Viscount Haldane finds no occasion to quote Huxley or Herbert Spencer. These witnesses have passed. He tells us that science has begun to scrutinise its own foundations and to "apply its own methods in the investigation." It is advancing with sure steps into a region which its experts and exponents have "for long" not thought of entering. In this region the scientist and metaphysician must meet, and they may find that they are necessary to each other. It is the region of the relativity of knowledge, which Einstein illustrates in its application to physics, though relativity is a principle that applies to art, philosophy, religion and the whole field of knowledge, over and above physical science. In its proper understanding there is nothing actually new connoted by this principle, thus put forward newly. Plato and Aristotle are said to have realised its far-reaching importance; Plotinus was concerned with it: in a word, it is an old and familiar idea. On such understanding one is inclined to speculate whether it was not known to the schoolmen of the Middle Age who, after their own manner, had taken all thought for their province.

As to the principle itself, Lord Haldane offers us three meanings of the term: (1) that our view of things varies with our personal circumstances and a changed position may revise that view completely; (2) that our direct knowledge is not of things as they are but as they appear in relation to our minds; (3) that experience is dependent on conditions which discover only certain aspects of experience. Our knowledge is relative in this sense, and so also is the experience to which it is directed. Einstein is concerned, as I have said, with the principle of relativity in physics, and in a notice like this it is possible to cite only one of his conclusions, namely, that the character of space and time is found to be purely relative, and so is their reality. Lord Haldane follows the principle outside physics, adopting a philosophical method. He is led thereby (1) to the recognition of a higher order, in which the distinction between thinking and what is thought is "in the end and ideally superseded"; (2) to the tentative acceptance, with Professor Cunningham, of time as a genuine form of reality and the consequent exclusion of a timeless Absolute; (3) to the conception of God as an entirety within which all distinctions and resulting relations must fall, whence He is not subject as differentiated from object and is no entity separated from ourselves; (4) to the recognition of the search after God as after something which is immanent within us; (5) to the acknowledgment of the implications of the personal self as more than merely finite; (6) to the admission that death "at its own level" is an actual event, but that at a level of a different order it does not touch the subject-self, which is no transitory physical object or organism; (7) to the acknowledgment of the self as that in which the universe centres.

Now it so happens that Lord Haldane condemns Mysticism in a sentence when he classes its method as one of negation, but in the deep states of mystical experience there is an age-long testimony to the truth of these views—save only, I think, as regards time and the Absolute. As one who recognises the validity of mystical claims, I count it good and of great augury that such an one as Lord Haldane, in the front rank of thought, has been brought by mental processes to affirm in his own forms of language the identical truths to which the mystics have borne their testimony on the ground of experience. It seems to me another illustration of this our marvellous epoch. We have followed the great quests of thought and objective discovery so far and long in the zeal and sincerity of the quest-spirit that after all the travellings we are going back to God—in a sense because we are driven, yet in a much deeper sense because we have been seeking Him unawares under other names through all. In this our going back, in our provisional and other conclusions by the mind-paths, we return also to the old science of the mystics, whose method is by no means negative only, it is also a mode of action. There is perhaps no notable book of the

* "Way of Revelation." By Wilfrid Ewart. 7s. 6d. (Putnams.)

† "The Reign of Relativity." By Viscount Haldane. 21s. net. (John Murray.)

moment more likely to lead in the direction of the mystical threshold those who can follow its findings to their final issues than is this on relativity, the reign of which—if it comes indeed to reign—may herald the Kingdom of God.

A. E. WAITE.

A TRIO.*

It is not uncommon to lay down a book with feelings of respect and admiration for its author; it is rare to lay one down with a feeling of simple gratitude for the provision of a four hours' entertainment. Few writers are capable of genuine comedy, and it is with surprised delight that we welcome a successful experiment. May Sinclair's "Mr. Waddington of Wyck" was worth in point of solid enjoyment all the psychological novels of the past five years put together; and now we have Aldous Huxley's "Crome Yellow."

It is the sort of book to which one refuses to apply standards, about which it is impossible to ask oneself whether it is or is not ephemeral, whether it possesses permanent qualities; one is conscious only of gratitude.

"Crome Yellow" is not really a novel. There is no plot, there is no theme; the various incidents are not threaded on any single string. It is a book of episode and digression. Denis Stone, a minor poet, arrives at a country house in the first chapter; and in the last chapter he departs from it. But "Crome Yellow" is not the story of Denis Stone. It is a discursive narrative; it is a satire on modern foibles; it exploits certain modern types. It has the charm of intimate conversation, during which the mind flies off at unexpected tangents. Its sole continuity is the continuity of Mr. Huxley's unflagging humour. In "Limbo" Mr. Huxley was just missing it all along; nothing quite came off. In "Crome Yellow" he just gets there every time. And perhaps the most agreeable reflection of the reader who has finished this entertaining book is the knowledge that Mr. Huxley has only begun his career and that there are still so many books for him to write and for us to read.

Eighteen months ago Michael Arlen caused a certain sensation with the publication of "The London Venture." It was a book of anecdote and causerie and reminiscence written in the manner of "Memoirs of My Dead Life." Indeed, there were so many resemblances of style and matter that the book was once at least reviewed under the heading, "Is it by George Moore?" Mr. Arlen has, however, in his new book abandoned the style at any rate of his master. "The Romantic Lady" is composed of three short stories and one long story. They are told in direct, straightforward narrative. An occasional phrase, such as "How charming it is to meet in life what one is tired of meeting in books," informs the reader that Mr. Arlen is a collector not only of first but also of privately printed George Moore editions; but on the whole as regards its style "The Romantic Lady" is a surprising successor to "The London Venture."

This change would naturally be thought to indicate an improvement in the quality of Mr. Arlen's work. But the interest of the narrative is not increased by it. For Mr. Arlen, while abandoning George Moore's style, has retained in a certain measure his technique, and the two are inseparable. Each of these four stories is embellished with an unnecessary wealth of discursive descriptions. The plot is in each case slight, and with the possible exception of "The Romantic Lady," the plot is in each case lost in its setting. George Moore's style is admirably fitted for the graceful, effortless decoration of a trivial theme. Mr. Arlen's new style is not. It is fitted for direct narrative, for straightforward storytelling. And though "The Romantic Lady" is a more original book and therefore perhaps a better book than "The London Venture," it provides the reader unfortunately with less entertainment.

Beverley Nichols's first novel, 'Prelude," was an interesting book and made one wonder whether its author would become a novelist. His second novel, "Patchwork," is an equally interesting book, but it closes speculation. It is unlikely that Mr. Nichols will ever be a good novelist. "Patchwork" is "Prelude" over again, with Oxford instead of Marlborough as its setting. Raymond Sheldon is Paul Trevelyan three years older, and the shadowy incidents and characters of the book have no object other than the providing of an obsequious background. Mr. Nichols parades the same personality, and though the study of that personality is not uninteresting, nor would it be unprofitable if impartial, it is not a sufficient basis for sustained dramatic narrative. Mr. Nichols had a big reputation at Oxford as a speaker, and there are many signs in "Patchwork" that "the spoken word" is his *métier*. There are several descriptions of speeches, and on these occasions the writing is firm, at all other times it is a backboneless imitation of Compton Mackenzie. Mr. Nichols is far more likely to do valuable work as an orator than as a writer.

ALEC WAUGH.

* "Crome Yellow." By Aldous Huxley. 7s. 6d. net. (Chatto & Windus.)—"The Romantic Lady." By Michael Arlen. 7s. 6d. net. (Collins.)—"Patchwork." By Beverley Nichols. 7s. 6d. net. (Chatto & Windus.)

Novel Notes.

THE TOWER OF OBLIVION. By Oliver Onions. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Merely to praise the cleverness and the ingenuity with which he has treated his latest theme—the case of a man who at forty-five begins and continues to live backward instead of forward, would be to render scant justice to the power and originality of so masterly a craftsman as Mr. Oliver Onions. Far better is it to announce to all his admirers that "The Tower of Oblivion" is the finest book he has written since "In Accordance With the Evidence," and that the closing chapters reach a level of pathos and poignancy to which the author has never before attained. We can think indeed of no scenes in recent fiction which are so starkly and plangently moving as those in which Derwent Rose, the hero, gone back to the age of eighteen, beseeches his old friend, Sir George Coverham, to aid and to abet his suit for the seventeen-year-old Jenny Aird. Mr. Onions has often been accused of being steely, of writing from the head instead of from the heart. In his study of the cataclysm that overwhelms Rose—novelist, athlete, swimmer and ex-officer—he easily rebuts this charge and reveals a tenderness, a sympathy and a passion which rank him with novelists like Mr. Wells and Mr. Galsworthy. The story is a fantasy of course; to give an account of its development, therefore, would be to spoil to some extent the reader's interest. So we shall tell no more of the plot than to reveal the quaint coincidence that makes hero, narrator, first heroine and last heroine's mother all professional writers of fiction. But we must enter a protest against Mr. Onions's new habit of overworking his adverbs, an exasperating trick which seems to be the result of his great admiration for Henry James.

CROSSING PICCADILLY CIRCUS. By Ward Muir. 7s. (Heinemann.)

There is a good deal of truth in the views upon art that old Adam Creighton expounds for the benefit of his son David, whose story is in this book. "All manner of follies and foulnesses," Adam says, among other things, "are foisted on us under the name of art. . . . We are given a book which may spell ruin for some readers, and we are told that this is justified because the book is art. Cant! As though there are not countless books which are fine and pure and true art, and the authors of which have not needed to write a solitary line which could do hurt!" Adam was an evangelist who toured the world as a popular preacher, and David, in his youth, had accompanied him and shared in the services to the extent

of playing the cornet. But David has outgrown that phase of his career and is a little ashamed of it; his father is dead, and the cornet laid aside. You meet him on the first page crossing Piccadilly Circus; as he pauses on the island midway, he sees Maisie Farlow on the opposite pavement, and Maisie's story and his own unfold themselves in his mind, and as he comes to the end of them, near the end of the book, he completes his crossing and greets her. Maisie is a girl of the demi-monde, a simple, unimaginative sort of innocent animal creature who, like Cinara, can be faithful in her fashion. Her character is sketched, the chronicle of her loves and various lovers narrated with shrewd humour and a large charity that neither excuses nor condemns, but shows the life as it is, its tawdry glamour, the dazzle and squalor and piteous cheapness of it all. The very frankness of the realism so robs it of allurement that, however much Adam himself might have disapproved of the theme, he could not have said such a story could do hurt to any and needs must have acknowledged the art with which the thing is done. Mr. Ward Muir has made a silk purse out of a sow's ear; his story might easily have been sordid and distasteful, but, leaving the tragedy implicit in it to speak for itself, he has told it lightly, sympathetically, sometimes cynically, and interests you in the least respectable of his people not because they are that but because they are so poignantly and primitively human.

MARJORIE CONYERS. By M. I. Whitham. 7s. 6d. (John Lane.)

Miss Whitham is as clever as ever in her characterisation. She should have made more of the silver spoons, after rousing our curiosity about them at the first, and the diabolical plot of Caroline oozes out in an unconvincing way. But apart from that the story is singularly attractive. Marjorie is left an orphan, dependent on rich relatives, and she occupies her position with dignity. Her beautiful cousin threatens to upset her happiness, and we are on the edge of fears for a time. But love asserts its rights, the inheritance is lost, and yet Marjorie and her lover come together by a stroke of dramatic justice. The essential charm of the book lies in the women, young and old, the two mothers, the wealthy spinster, and the two girls. The common ordeal to which all are subjected is worry about money, worry about possessing or desiring or lacking it. But the atmosphere of the novel is not sordid. On the contrary it is vital, and the vitality comes from the heroine's fine spirit. We have nothing but praise for the crisp, sure touch of the authoress.

SWEET WATERS. By Harold Nicolson. (Constable.)

A romance of Turkey, by one who knows the diplomatic service from the inside. The two men in the book are both connected with it. Tenterden, the hero—who appears rather tardily—is Counsellor of Embassy at Constantinople. He has served there before. . . . "On the table the familiar, inevitable incidents of the Chancery . . . the typewriters, the Foreign Office List, the envelopes, the paper baskets, and the little green tags, the familiar cameo on the writing paper." There is a stately heroine called Eirene. Tenterden loves her, but thinks himself too old for her. She plays about for a while with Angus, the unworthy fellow, but then goes to nurse at the front (for war plays a large part in the volume); and all ends happily. The book abounds in colour; it is full of a sensitive and attractive charm. And, of course, the story gains enormously through its picturesque and uncommon setting.

THE SINGING CAPTIVES. By E. B. C. Jones. 6s. (Cobden-Sanderson.)

At a first reading or a casual reading this new novel by Miss Jones impresses by its close, its scrutinising study of the half-dozen or so characters of which it is composed. At a second reading, or a more leisurely and thoughtful reading, the size, the force, even the simplicity of the story, become realised. The key-note of it all is meant to be struck by the quotation on the title page from Webster's "The White Devil": "We think caged birds sing, when indeed they cry." In our opinion, however, these caged birds depicted by the author—these "singing captives"—are crying all the time, with scarcely an exception. Put shortly, the story is concerned with a husband and wife—Sir Harold and Lady Peel—their sons, Roden and Francis; their daughters, Caroline and Stella, and Lady Peel's nephew, Evelyn Cashel. These, with a few outside friends at times, live in wealthy ease, in unquestioned luxury, but criticising, jarring, misunderstanding, even scorning one another in their daily intimacy. On the surface it is a light, frivolous life that Miss Jones depicts so carefully, but as the story advances we see the individual feelings underneath. Lady Peel, so restless and seemingly futile; Sir Harold, so suave, stolid, courteous, seemingly immovable in his wealth and reliability; Roden, so sulky, discontented, idealistic, despairing, with his genuine admiration for the half-educated typist he had met in the Green Park; Caroline, so self-conscious, self-critical, impatient of the smallnesses of her mother and Stella, with her tragedy of a lover killed in the great war; Stella, apparently frivolous, yet revealing occasional glimpses of a passion of sisterly love; Evelyn Cashel, so polished, smiling, clever, insincere. It is a distinctive family. And then, at last, Sir Harold—always a speculator—is ruined. And the feelings of each man and woman in the book are, the reader realises, already revealed, even before the crash comes. It is a piece of writing that commands respect as well as admiration for its care and its brilliance.

THE CHILDREN OF THE LION. By Ashley Gibson. 5s. (Colombo: *Times of Ceylon.*)

The public of the West, even that section of it known as the "reading public," cares little as a rule for the legends and literature of the Orient lands. Yet, as Mr. F. W. Bain has shown, there are stores of beauty for those who have the knowledge and perseverance in the literature of India, to take only one country out of many. In this little book Mr. Gibson places before us a few characteristic examples of classic Sinhalese work in the "Mahavansa" tales. History, myth and fantasy are so closely blended that only the scholar can attempt to analyse them, and even he may be baffled. In the absence of special knowledge on the subject we can only record our appreciation of the attractive manner in which the author, using Dr. Geiger's translation, has rendered several of the stories into a pleasant narrative form. Intrigues, soothsaying, magic, play their part, and animals have the gift of intelligent speech, as in the folklore of all primitive races; each little story has a beauty of its own. The concluding tale, written by the author himself, proves how excellently he has studied his material, for in delicacy and charm it is in no way inferior to the others.

BELSAVAGE. By Henrietta Leslie. 7s. 6d. (Page.)

When Belsavage, young and ardent, married the handsome and scholarly Martin Dean, she stepped from the exciting and jolly companionship of the south-western studios into a country life of loneliness. For Martin had queer ideas on the subject of parentage, and no real knowledge of women at all; absorbed in his writing and his vegetable garden, he treated his wife merely as a friend. And when Dick Mortimer suddenly arrived from Africa the inevitable result was that his admiration of the lovely, lonely Belsavage brought instant response. The two had their hour of happiness; then, amid the dying fires of passion, came realisation of consequences, the admission that love meant something more than this, and the awakening of Martin to the fact that his wife was a woman, not simply an unemotional chatelaine. Martin, we must confess, is hardly credible; he is the weak point in the story. Otherwise, the author has drawn her characters well and with consistent care, the conversations being

exceptionally good. At the end comes reconciliation, magnanimity on the part of Martin, and the prospect of a home instead of a house. It is a clever novel built round a theme very difficult to treat, with several tense situations, but it lacks the compelling force, the touch of greatness and background of tragedy, which might have made it powerful. Belsavage herself is vividly depicted, and is convincing at every move; in her the whole interest is concentrated, and had the author been as successful with her men characters as she is with this life-like heroine her work would have taken a very high place in the fiction of the year.

THE GARDEN OF MEMORIES. By H. St. John Cooper. 7s. 6d. (Sampson Low.)

If this romance follows a pattern which has become familiar to novel-readers, it nevertheless is worth reading for the sake of its originality of treatment—a pattern containing the same elements being capable of very varied arrangement. A *mariage de convenance*, with its risks of the appearance of former lovers, altered within a very short time to a marriage of affection; a series of clever contrasts between moneyed, vulgar but good-hearted City magnates and poor but proud aristocracy; a village romance in interludes; and a touch of mysticism in the memory-dreams of two of the characters whose ancestors lived on the scene where the story is laid; such are the materials cleverly woven together by the author. The plot is excellently worked out; one has to finish the book, once it is begun. And though the sentimental side is slightly laboured, there are many pages of genuine humour, and many characters which give evidence of keen observation.

THE NOBLE ARMY. By Christine Campbell Thomson. 7s. 6d. net. (John Bale, Sons & Danielsson.)

Miss Campbell Thomson has chosen the tragedy of Mary Queen of Scots around which to group the dramatic happenings of her story. "History," she says, "is merely incidental—a background for character"; and she introduces more than one heroic personality into a tale of Catholic devotion and intrigue on behalf of Queen Elizabeth's beautiful rival. Gervase Wyllard, sensitive and peace-loving, is not found wanting when the time comes to choose between love and duty; nor does his young brother Basil fail in the test; and Anthony Babington of Dethick meets his end gallantly, faithful in heart and soul to the Queen who was never to reign over England. A period of strife and scheming has given Miss Campbell Thomson a lurid and tragic setting, and although her tale of peril and adventure is destined to go down in a blood-red sunset of disaster, because of the demands of historical fact, she saves for some of her characters a hope of better things and the consolation that though men be slain and causes lost, truth cannot die and courage belongs to all time, The story is capably written and may be warmly recommended to all lovers of old-time romance.

JEWELS IN THE DUST. By Edith Nepean. 8s. 6d. (Stanley Paul.)

This book is not so much a novel as a "movie" between the covers of a book. We had noticed the fact, had even sensed the delights of a comfortable cinema stall, before the inscription on the wrapper, "Author of 'Gwyneth of the Welsh Hills' (appearing on the films)" gave a clue to the puzzle. The story is a little involved, but it travels so swiftly that complexities appear inevitable. The three men and the two women "change partners" in a bewildering manner. It is a relief at the end to find the heroine, who is charming and irresistible, safely provided with a child which belongs to her lawful husband. At one time, at more than one time indeed, so satisfactory a development appeared problematical. Perhaps the best parts of the story concern the filming of a big play, with bits of information as to the process, new to the reader—such as a necessity for "goggles," owing to the very strong lights. These are small matters, but interesting. We hope that "Jewels in the Dust" may appear triumphantly upon many a "screen," to which medium we think it more suited than to that of cold print.

GREEN STONES OF EVIL. By Margaret Peterson. 3s. 6d. (Melrose.)

In her novel, "Green Stones of Evil," Margaret Peterson has attempted the impossible, but so cleverly that, once begun, it is difficult to lay her book aside unfinished. The author herself says, "One cannot describe dreams and nightmares." This is just what she has attempted; or rather to describe "Evil." It is impossible! Perhaps only one writer has come near to success—Rudyard Kipling in that most terrible short story of our language, "The End of the Passage." And there he attains his purpose by describing the effect of Evil upon the victim, not by any description of Evil itself. Miss Peterson's story is arresting; her descriptions of scenery are delightful and convincing; her characters well thought out and full of interest. The book is unusual and the story grips.

THE BEST LOVER. 8s. 6d. By "Rita." (Hutchinson.)

This volume contains four stories, none of them short, none too long. It is interesting to find "Rita" apparently scoffing at style, while her own style is so easy, flowing and assured. Not on a single page is the reader pulled up by a superfluous word, and, thanks be! the ubiquitous "that," so continually encountered and resented, seldom raises its ugly head. "Rita" has kept her worst story for the end; luckiiy it is also her shortest. "Princess Imperious" is not a convincing narrative, and the heroine fails to arouse much sympathy. "Wanted—To Adopt" is naturally impossible, but how amusingly impossible! We confess to a desire for absolute enlightenment as to the exact ages of the hero and heroine; but perhaps they never even told one another! The longest tale, which gives its title to the book, is full of frolic—frolic which ends, as it should, in happiness. It is refreshing to find oneself amongst young people of whom, when they overstep the mark, their creator obviously disapproves, while she saves her affection for those—and there are several—who possess hearts, or brains, or both. A gentle book with which to pass a pleasant, idle hour.

The Bookman's Table.

DRAMATIC THEORY AND PRACTICE IN FRANCE. 1690–1808. By Eleanor F. Jourdain. 12s. 6d. (Longmans.)

In the French drama of the eighteenth century Miss Jourdain tills a field so admittedly barren that she may well have been tempted to enliven her subject by shirking its responsibilities. To select a round dozen of representative plays, giving their plots in full and interpreting them in relation to their contemporaries, was perhaps her best chance of writing a "popular" book. It says much for her conscientiousness and critical honesty that she has resisted this temptation, giving us instead a detailed survey of her period in which even the dullest of dull dogs is allowed his little day; and if this method makes the field of Miss Jourdain's cultivation rather "heavy going" for the dilettante reader, the student reaps the richer harvest. At the same time, the book reveals no little constructive craftsmanship. The chief danger of so encyclopædic a work is that it may be overladen with detail and become chaotic. Miss Jourdain averts this by examining each playwright in the light of certain standards applicable to the century as a whole; and she contrives that these standards shall be within the experience of the average reader even when he has no knowledge of the individual playwright. Thus she looks back to Molière and to the Classical Tragedy, forward to the spirit of the Revolution—in either case basing her arguments on familiar ground.

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Photo by Vandyk. **Mr. Granville Bantock.**

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to verses that matter, eschewing the gilded attractions of catchpenny minstrelsy. They are a growing band.

Whether he be an excursionist or no, there is hope for the man who collaborates with Bridges, Brooke, Binyon, Gibson, Hodgson, the Housmans, Kipling, Masefield or W. B. Yeats, to name only ten of the moderns whose names figure on recent song covers. There is certainly hope. The question is: how much? Given a bad, or at least characterless lyric, what are the chances of a good song? Given a good lyric, what are the chances of a good song?—or a bad? Briefly, to what extent does good music depend upon good poetry? Strictly speaking, of course, a good song can only result from a double and dependent excellence. But taking the word "good" in a more popular sense, one is forced to admit, looking back over a surprising number of classic songs that have inspired the world this many a year, that they derive from lyrics which, unset, would have been long ago forgotten. And for operatic libretti!

Indeed, harmless and undistinguished lyrics have to their credit a not dishonourable record. They have their points. Their most obvious advantage is that they do not argue. They are not aggressively sensible. Like most characterless things they are docile. They are all things to all tunes. Hence their popularity with even great musicians. It would be too much to argue that weak lyrics have positively inspired great songs, for milk and water is not a heady draught; but it cannot be disputed that many great songs have been, as it were, released by milk-and-water poetry. In the mind of the creative genius are many song-poems which have not settled into words. He chances upon a lyric which gives a faint voice to his music, and out upon it flows the stuff of which songs are made as pearl-stuff flows upon a nucleus of nacre. The musician has been inspired by the poor lyric in much the same way as some of the greatest poets have been inspired by women so characterless as to make the world wonder at the inexplicable infatuation. The ideal was there: the woman was there. She approximated, glorified by the light in the dreamer's eyes. . . . I think it was Rossini who boasted that he could set a railway time-table to music. He probably could have done. A railway time-table, having the maximum of sound to the minimum of sense and form, has infinite possibilities. At the moment, however, poor lyrics are at a discount. They have served their turn; they may serve their turn again, given the right undiscriminating genius. In the meanwhile the musician has developed in his literary appreciations.

The origin of these remarks is a chance collection of songs (enumerated on p. 200) from two publishing houses. They vary considerably in style and quality, but they have it in common that all are settings of verses by authors of independent repute. Of the three composers represented, two, Landon Ronald and Henry Geehl, have cultivated the popular ballad, and one, Granville Bantock, has not.

One's immediate curiosity concerning the first two is to see how far they will escape from their more ordinary preoccupations. Mr. Ronald does and does not. There is a curious similarity among the songs; and similarity between settings of Binyon, Herrick and a very ballady verse by Howard Burleigh suggests a lack of adaptability. Mr. Ronald, shaping all his verses to his own style, resembles an actor who fits his parts to himself rather than himself to his parts. Indeed his songs immediately suggest histrionics. They are characteristically graceful; they have a certain rhapsodic flow; they are mannered. They suggest a facile, polished, but studied gesture. It was by chance that I took Mr. Geehl's three songs, "Requiescat," "Calm is the Morn" and "Now Fades the Snow" in that order. All have words by Tennyson. By the first two I was pleasantly surprised. The words had effectively rescued Mr. Geehl. The first escapes the mawkishness that the poetry might have provoked, and it is written well for the voice within the small compass of an octave. Both establish an atmosphere. In the third setting, though the words are perhaps the most interesting of the three, they have failed. The music is often obvious; and the conventional leaping chords between the verses prepare one for the worst. It comes. Mr. Geehl gives the climactic note of seven beats and a pause to a mere preposition. Sad relapse!

Seeing that Granville Bantock had drawn upon Browning for four of his five songs I was at once intrigued, for Browning at his easiest is on the abstruse side for song. As it happened I started with the toughest: "Now" from the Dramatic Lyrics. I thought: "That will puzzle Mr. Bantock." I was wrong. Success or failure, the song is a *tour de force*. It flows. It marches, and swiftly. But was it worth while? Intricate, highly parenthetic, the words are impossible to make into an understandable song. I cannot imagine even the most alert audience fathoming

> "So you make perfect the present—condense,
> In a rapture of rage, for perfection's endowment,
> Thought and feeling and soul and sense——"

at a first hearing—or a second. The other poems are easier, and such difficulties as they present Mr. Bantock sweeps away with the same broad gesture. The best, "A Pearl, A Girl," in spite of its painful title, has a fine lyrical movement. It is interesting to note that the easiest words have resulted in the least satisfactory song, "Summum Bonum." The triple "kiss" at the end, even if it were a pleasant word for a top G, which it is not, irritates. In "The Moon Maiden's Song" from Dowson's "Pierrot of the Minute," a mellifluous lyric has been made the occasion for a grateful song beautifully written for the voice.

JOHAN BACKER-LUNDE.

The third of the admirably planned concerts of the Bromley Orchestral Society on December 14th was rendered notable by the second performance in England of four sketches for orchestra by the Norwegian composer, Johan Backer-Lunde.

His chief fame depends in his native country upon songs, of which some have been published in England. Of these two were sung by Mme. Luia Juta. They present him in his more serious mood—some of those I remember were delightfully whimsical and humorous things. The first, "Stig, sol, stig," is of a wild eeriness characteristic of so much Scandinavian music and poetry:

> "Rise, sun, rise!
> Rise on your glorious way.
> Kill all traces of your icy cold winter,
> Dusky days and coal-black nights.
> Kill all trolls that shrink and scamper,
> Afraid of the light, the light and you,
> Afraid of the light and you!
> Rise, sun, rise on your glorious way!

" Rise, sun, rise !
Rise over hill over height.
Yet here are chilling gusts in the air,
The grass is withered and pale lies the tuft,
The flowers withhold their colour and fragrance.
Comes not the Summer soon ?
Rise, sun, rise over hill, over height."

It is a fine and vigorous song. The second, " Hvor er Gud ? " contrasts with the same sombre atmosphere a gentler and more wistful note :

" Where is God ? In roaring oceans.
Where is God ? In sighing forests.
Turn to Him and learn to listen
And His voice you soon will hear.
Where is God ? In praying children.
Where is God ? In wandering stars,
In the blare of battle trumpets,
In the sacred tones of organs.
Where is God ? In fragrant blossoms,
In the song of nightingales,
In caressing breath of Spring—
Everywhere eternally."

The orchestral work of Backer-Lunde is of recent date, and the four pieces on this occasion are not sufficient to afford any clue to his quality as a composer in the larger forms. The first, " Taake " is the most ambitious. By an interesting coincidence it came next in the programme to the A Minor piano concerto of Grieg. Without any direct imitation of the older master, there is a real affinity in style. They are both strongly national. They are both instinct with the spirit of Norway, its mountains and torrents, its poetry, its songs. " Taake " pictures the sea-mists on the fiords. The atmosphere is quickly evoked and firmly held by a clever use of wood-wind and muted strings. An interesting and effective piece of work of strongly nationalistic flavour. The second, " Halling," a rough peasant dance, is less ambitious and, on first hearing, less interesting than the other three. Either as a result of structural defect or of faulty playing the conclusion on the present occasion was unexpected and a little lame in effect. " Serenata," the third sketch, of which the style is indicated by the title, is a jolly thing, considerably the most modern in tone of the four. Whimsical, dexterous and unsentimental, it possesses a charming humour and variety of mood. The concluding " Burlesque " has the air of being based upon a folk-song which is treated with a brisk and merry directness of style.

Although exceedingly good for a semi-amateur Orchestra, the playing was inevitably not of a quality to give a definitive performance to new work by a strange composer, and its occasional crudity and lack of light and shade was accentuated by the size of the hall. Even so, the impression remained that Backer-Lunde is a composer with something to say and a faculty for saying it clearly. His imagination is picturesque and has variety. About his material, treatment nor use of orchestral colour is there anything innovatory nor strikingly modern. He is not extravagant. He does not experiment. On the other hand he knows clearly what he wants and secures it in the simplest way. The result is an effect of lucidity and clearness of colour similar to that which is one of the greatest charms of Grieg.

The outstanding qualities of his work in these four sketches are simplicity, directness of statement, and humour. They will form a welcome addition to the repertory of orchestral bodies which are sufficiently wise and adventurous to break new ground. The promoters and players of the Bromley Society are warmly to be congratulated upon their enterprise. Their work on this occasion was stimulating and full of promise.

R. B.

SUCH IS "LIFE."

Mr. Ernest Austin asks us to publish the following note :

My attention has been called to a criticism of a song of mine which appears in your October issue. The title of the

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song is "Life," and the name of the critic is May Byron. If inaccuracy and impudent ignorance should be the qualifications of a critic—they are here blatantly set forth. I am accused of bad diction, of placing heavy accents on the words *But, and, or, Through, 'Tis*, and "worst of all" (as your critic writes) on *Per*-haps. Your critic also refers to the last *bar*.

Both these statements are inaccurate. My song is not barred at all—and the imagined accents on the words mentioned above are delusions of your critic. But her delusions are stated with such an air of convincing superiority that I owe it to myself and my publisher to contradict them.

And now in explanation of the form of my song, I quote a passage from the Programme of the Blackpool Festival, 1911—"Quite a number of Mr. Ernest Austin's songs have been published without bar-lines, and, to the *Musical Standard* of June 29th, 1907, he contributed a powerful plea for the abolition of bars and time-signatures, arguing that the *pulse* of the music must change at every dramatic or emotional change of words. So he would dispense with the customary mode of denoting time-signatures, giving the crotchet or minim a metronomic value which would cover accentual changes. A continuous and settled time-signature is often found to be an impossibility on account of the numerous changes and alterations of the pulse and rhythm of melodic phrases."

This particular song, one of the examples referred to above, has twice been chosen as a test by the Blackpool Festival Committee, and was included in the Art series recently published by Mr. J. H. Larway, because it has dared to exist since 1908—with an ever-increasing circulation.

This same song was scored for orchestra by me expressly at the request of Sir Henry Wood, a musician who is not likely to interest himself in songs containing "amazing inaccuracies."

Your critic states that the last "*bar*" *suggests the smell of hot rolls, coffee, bacon, and the morning paper. Mr. Ernest Austin* needed courage here," etc. . . . Maybe, but I should be sorry to have the courage of such ignorance and bad taste as I see manifested in this criticism.

ERNEST AUSTIN.

Our reviewer replies:

It is true that in a strictly literal sense Mr. Ernest Austin's music is not barred. Neither were the Madrigals of the Elizabethan composers: and the writers of "Ayres" changed the length and measure of their "bars" *ad libitum* throughout a song. But dotted vertical lines are employed by Mr. Ernest Austin, not only at the end of every stave, but four times in the course of the music: and the average vocalist would naturally regard these as bar-lines of some sort, no other explanation of them being forthcoming. The accented prepositions, etc., on which I commented, occur, in each case, immediately after these dotted lines, i.e. at the beginning of a fresh section; and the average vocalist aforesaid (who is seldom a technical expert, and is probably unacquainted with Mr. Ernest Austin's expressed views on the subject), would scarcely regard those words otherwise than as being stressed.

I am not concerned to defend myself against Mr. Ernest Austin's charges of ignorance, etc. My qualifications as a critic are known to you. I have expressed an honest opinion of the song "Life"; but I do not claim infallibility. If my judgment be at fault, I am sorry: but, such as it is, it is mine.

MAY BYRON.

AN AFRIDI SONG. Music by Percy Elliott. (Paxton.)

Both the words and air of this song have strength and distinction. It goes with a swing from start to finish.

AS I WENT A-ROAMING. By May H. Brahe. (Enoch.)

A very tuneful and simple duet for soprano and contralto, with a quaint old-fashioned lilt.

JULY FUGITIVE. Words by Francis Thompson. Music by Amherst Webber. (Ricordi.)

This charming setting of Francis Thompson's beautiful poem has been sung by Dame Nellie Melba, and though rather difficult is not too difficult for a talented amateur.

MADONNA LILIES. By Robert Coningsby Clarke. (Chappell.)

A pleasing fancy, pleasingly set to music.

BELLS ACROSS THE MEADOWS. By Albert W. Ketèlbey. (Keith, Prowse.)

A picturesque descriptive piece—not difficult for the average player.

FAIRY RECORDS FOR CHILDREN.

"It's me that was born," he said angrily, "Why shouldn't I be told how I did it?" This is one of the sentences in the charming child fantasy "Birth," in the "Tales of the Fairy Dustman" records just published by "His Master's Voice." These embody quite a new idea. They are the work of four people. "Puck the Painter" made up the delicate narrative, laden with pretty and true and useful thoughts that the littlest can understand. "Pan the Piper" composed the haunting and beautiful melodies. Marjorie Montefiore spoke them distinctly and Walter Glynne sang tunefully. The whole thing is done with such airiness and art that the work deserves a big success. Of the six in the series, "The Dustman's Arrival," "The Little Nut Tree," "Birth," "Faith," "Courage" and "The Bunnie's Lullaby," "Courage" is best of all.

The Drama.

WILL SHAKESPEARE.

BY GEORGE SAMPSON.

ALMOST the only fact we know for sure about Shakespeare is that he wasn't Bacon. This certainty comes to us through something stronger than mere evidence; it comes through feeling, or, if you like, through faith. By logic, Achilles never overtakes the tortoise; but by the truth that is beyond logic, we are certain he does. So, when some cryptogramophone grinds out his squeaky arguments to prove that "Twelfth Night" was written by the author of "The Advancement of Learning" we can reply, as simply and sweetly as one ever can to the human gramophone, "We *know* it wasn't."

The next best thing to knowing nothing about a character for drama is knowing everything. In the first case you can freely imagine the facts; in the second you can freely select the facts. That the first is the better case is clear from the frequently recurring necessity of altering facts to suit the story. For examples, see Shakespeare, *passim*.

I have made these very obvious remarks because,

when Miss Clemence Dane's play, "Will Shakespeare," was produced at the Shaftesbury Theatre, most of the people who write about plays in the papers proceeded to discuss with great energy two propositions: the first, whether it was right to put Shakespeare on the stage at all, and the second, whether the Shakespeare thus put upon the stage bore any resemblance to the real Shakespeare. It is with proper humility that I differ from these experts, but I venture to think that the first proposition is entirely irrelevant, and has no use whatever except the pleasant one of allowing the critic to write at least half of his notice before going to the theatre. Shakespeare, who put almost everybody on the stage, would have had no doubt about the matter, for his dramatic progenitors even put God on the stage, as Goethe did two centuries after Shakespeare. Rules *a priori* are valueless in art. The only valid test is the pragmatic test, Is the character artistically successful? Can it be successfully transmitted from stage to audience so as to give artistic pleasure and conviction? Whether the character is real or imaginary, credible or fantastic, matters not an atom. The sole test is whether it can get over the footlights alive.

To the second question—whether Miss Dane's Shakespeare is a true portrait of the real Shakespeare, the most obvious answer is that there is no "real" Shakespeare, definitely and indisputably known. The few established facts about Shakespeare are sufficient to make, say, a thigh-bone, the rest of the image being conjectural plaster of Paris, like the reconstituted *megatheria* in museums. The Shakespeare we think we know is the Shakespeare we make for ourselves on the principle enunciated by Bagehot, that the man who wrote "Hamlet" must have been such a man as could have written it. Now here is a curious point. No critic raises the least objection when a scholar like Dowden recreates Shakespeare's mind and art in a volume of prose criticism; but most critics lift indignant voices to the sky when an imaginative writer like Miss Clemence Dane recreates Shakespeare's mind and art in a volume of poetic drama. Let us say firmly and distinctly that *one is as valid as the other*. If we are going to reject on principle Miss Dane's imaginative view of Shakespeare we must equally reject Dowden's critical view of Shakespeare. Criticism cannot claim for itself a liberty it denies to poetry.

Most of the critics of "Will Shakespeare" whose notices I saw concerned themselves with propositions they were not required to discuss. They asserted first that Shakespeare must not be put on the stage at all (as if he hadn't already been put on the stage about a dozen times), and next, that the "real" Shakespeare was a familiar figure totally unlike Miss Clemence Dane's hero; and the effect of all this irrelevant indignation was that the public got from the supposed experts a conviction that the play was entirely unsuccessful as a dramatic entertainment. So they began to stay away. But the experts were wrong. With certain reservations to be indicated presently, "Will Shakespeare" is a highly successful, as well as a very beautiful stage play. It is enthusiastically received by those who see it. It has strong emotional scenes boldly faced. It has striking characters excellently acted. It grips the

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attention, and leaves the attentive auditor in the imaginative atmosphere of poetry for days afterwards. Moreover it is richly, movingly English. I cannot say what the peculiar quality is that makes England something that is not Ireland or Wales or Scotland or France or Italy; but, as an Englishman, I am acutely sensitive to that quality in fact and in art. I can never take England for granted. There is something about the look and "feel" of England that grips me at the heart whenever I come home even from the short absence of a holiday; and it is this "something" that certain of our greatest writers are specially happy in embodying. Rabelais, Montaigne and Molière could never have been English; Fielding, Hazlitt and Dickens could never have been anything else. But the greatest in this kind is Shakespeare himself, the most English of all English writers, never to be really understood by the most diligent of foreign students; and not the least high quality of "Will Shakespeare" is that it smells strongly of England all through. Clemence Dane's Elizabeth is embodied England.

Clemence Dane.

The critics, then, were quite wrong in denouncing Miss Dane's figure of Shakespeare as unpardonable or unpermissible or unhistorical; but they would, alas, have been right had they denounced it as uninteresting; and that charge really matters. The unfortunate fact, which no well-wisher should seek to disguise from the author, is that her Shakespeare is rather dull and her Anne Hathaway rather tiresome. In a play that is full of poetry Shakespeare is the least poetical figure. As a youth he is ill-mannered, obtuse and unkind even to coarseness; as the older man he is morbid and dry and morose. I am bound to add that Miss Dane's faulty handling of the character is not redeemed by Mr. Philip Merivale, who plays the part very soundly and conscientiously, but who is as lean and saturnine as the "real" Shakespeare was (undoubtedly) rich and jovial. The Shakespeare of Miss Dane and Mr. Merivale could never have invented Sir John and Sir Toby.

Miss Moyna Macgill had an impossible part to play; for Anne is at one moment a tearful, discordant little shrew, and at the next a creature rapt into the empyrean and becoming the inspired voice of mystic motherhood. Right from the beginning of the play Anne is a much more poetical person than Shakespeare himself and makes his alleged need of escape from the prose of home seem the thinnest of excuses. Generally, in the first act there is too much of everything—too much talk, too much recrimination, too much Will, too much Anne, too much Henslowe, and far too much mummery of Visions and Fates. A ruthless producer should have revised this act inexorably with the abhorred but necessary shears. The whole play has here and there moments of dullness and excess, due possibly to the author's symbolic purpose, but they too can be easily removed for stage purposes. The gravest stage fault is that the play goes on too long. When the Queen departs, and Shakespeare, new-inspired, turns resolutely to the task of transmuting his suffering into song, the play is ended and the curtain should fall. We certainly do not want to hear a few more pages of Anne's mysterious "Voice." We get far too much of this feminine "Chorus," perhaps because the woman in Miss Dane cannot deny a deserted wife the privilege of recrimination, even though it be on the mystic plane. "Super-nag," let us call it.

The later acts are better than the first. We get Elizabeth of England matchlessly played by Miss Haidée Wright, and Mary Fitton, embodied as a "Beautiful Black Devil" (if she will permit the paraphrase) by Miss Mary Clare. Her scene of surrender to Shakespeare on the night of "Romeo and Juliet" is a moving and convincing piece of strong, emotional acting. Mr. Claude Rains made Kit Marlowe a full-blooded, dashing lover, against whom the melancholy and tristful Shakespeare stood no possible chance. Only in his death-scene did Mr. Rains fail to rise to the height of his part. It is needless to add that Henslowe was delightfully played by that faultless Autolycus and Sir Toby, Mr. Arthur Whitby.

And so, after making a full and strict deduction of all its faults, I turn to the balance of beauty and declare that "Will Shakespeare" is the bravest and loveliest play the London theatre has had for many years, and I think it a serious matter that so many accredited critics of drama could do no more with this piece of fresh and living beauty than trample it obtusely into the dust. Some of these writers have been unpleasantly notorious just lately, and it is a sign of times not good when a sane journalist like Mr. Massingham should write a letter to the papers calling for a close time in dramatic criticism.

The printed play, now happily available,* confirms the fine impressions of the acted drama. The titular character is better in the book than on the stage, and the others are certainly no worse. What strikes one

* "Will Shakespeare: An Invention in Four Acts." 6s. net. (Heinemann.)

about the writing, whether prose or verse, is its strength, its personal, underived originality. In a play about Shakespeare there is not a single line derived from his works. It is a very remarkable woman who can write in this strain of mingled power and loveliness, and keep to the height of her great argument without dropping even for a moment into stage sentiment and banality. Moreover, it is not merely pretty writing, it is real dramatic verse that carries each scene on without a pause. Unless the England that once loved poetry, the England that once responded to the might and magic of Shakespeare himself is dead beyond recall, this great imaginative tribute to our greatest soul should be both the herald of a better stage and a treasured possession of the reader.

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN.

By T. Michael Pope.

THERE is, we are told, something of a slump in the London theatres at the present time. These slumps are periodical; their causes are difficult to ascertain; they are rarely of long duration. In the meanwhile, here is a fact to consider. Early in the month of October a season of Gilbert and Sullivan opera was inaugurated at the Prince's Theatre, one of the most capacious—as it is one of the most inaccessible—playhouses in London. The season will terminate in April. That is to say, the promoters are confident of being able to pack the Prince's Theatre for six months with nothing more novel or attractive than a series of popular revivals.

To what is the astonishing success of these operas to be attributed? How comes it that Gilbert and Sullivan share with Shakespeare a place in the popular affection which has hitherto been accorded to no other British dramatist—no, not even to Sheridan? We are suffering from no lack of musical plays to-day; but we have no Gilbert, and no Sullivan.

That, I suspect, is the real answer to the problem. It is now fifty years ago since William Schwenk Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan first met and, collaborating in "Trial by Jury," laid the foundations of English comic opera. That meeting marks an epoch in the history of the British theatre. It may be that such things do not happen twice.

Apart from the happy conjunction of these two stars, it must be borne in mind that Gilbert, as a writer of polished lyrics, had the advantage of being the first in the field. The English musical play had, for all practical purposes, ceased to exist in 1871. It had been supplanted by French *opéra bouffe*, which, though not without merit, had never seized very strongly upon the popular imagination. The strength of Gilbert's achievement lay in the fact that he revived the English musical play, gave it a new form, and invested it with a dignity which it never attained before and which it has never attained since. For Gilbert has had many followers, but no successor.

Since Gilbert's day the stage lyric has pursued a strange and devious course. It is generally the work of a man who has been called in to furnish a few musical numbers to some play designed primarily to afford a suitable part to one of the leading "stars" of the day.

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